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**New Teacher Induction in China:
A Qualitative Case Study of Practice and Experience in
Yinchuan City through the Lens of Western Literature and
Theories and Concepts Therein**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the University of
Edinburgh for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Declaration

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in compliance with the regulations of the University of Edinburgh, I certify that the author of this study is the undersigned.

Han Xu

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Abstract

The importance of designing and delivering comprehensive induction programmes for newly qualified school teachers (e.g. Draper and O'Brien, 2006) is widely accepted. In China, ongoing curriculum reform and teacher professionalization require such programmes to address issues such as teacher turnover, teacher performance and student learning outcomes. This thesis reports on the findings of a PhD project exploring induction of newly qualified teachers in Yinchuan city, China. The project centred on a qualitative case study involving new teachers, mentoring teachers, school principals and local education officials.

Against a background review of the relevant induction policies and provision, topic-focussed interviews were conducted in 2009-10 on two separate occasions in their first year of teaching with 23 new secondary school teachers from different subject departments across 7 schools of various type, and with 6 local education officials, and 17 school principals and mentoring teachers.

Drawing on an autobiographical approach, personal accounts from the participating teachers were subject to narrative analysis to explore the extent to which teachers' perspectives changed during the first year of teaching. The conditions under which perspectives were more likely to change were also considered and three main themes emerged: job motivation, self-image and subjective educational theory. Within each of these themes, sub-themes with respect to the relational context in which teachers' worked were identified as contributing to developing teachers' professional identity.

By using a voice-centred relational analytical method to allow flexibility in taking advantage of different types of narrative analysis methods, the data revealed interesting issues concerning new teachers' expectations and perceptions of the teaching profession and the induction programme offered. The narratives were further explored based on the theoretical considerations of teacher's professional

identity, early professional learning (McNally, 2004) and various factors influencing teachers' professional identity (Day and Gu, 2007). This study aims to deepen and further the emerging studies on teacher induction in China which mainly focused on large-size cities such as Shanghai and Beijing, and to identify some of the key characteristics of induction programmes by locating the study in the unique context and essential conditions of Yinchuan city, a medium-size city in China. It also attempts to benefit from a narrative approach and innovative analytical methods which give voice to the participants which hopefully would contribute to a more humanistic approach in looking at the phenomenon of new teacher induction in China.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Problems

Beginning teacher induction has attracted increasing attention across the globe in recent years (Berliner and Tikunoff, 1976; Calderhead, 1992; Draper, Fraser and Taylor, 1997; Goodson, 1992; Lo, 2000; Tickle, 2000; McNally, 2006). Studies by such as Lacey (1977), Goodson (1994), Kelchtermanns and Ballet (2002), McNally (2006) have revealed problems and areas for improvement in the process of continuing to learn to teach when in employment. Many researchers are concerned with the survival needs of beginning teachers and the effects of induction on beginning teacher performance, retention and student learning (Gold, 1996; Smith and Ingersoll, 2004). As Whisnant, Elliott and Pyncheon (2005) point out, even beginning teachers who have gone through the best preparation are in need of quality support as they need to be able to respond to the constant challenges of their profession. And, beginning teachers are more likely to experience burnout and eventually leave the profession if they feel that the support is inadequate (Strong, 2008).

Researchers also focus on the socialisation process that melds beginning teachers with the established culture of teaching and schooling system (Schempp, Sparkes, and Templin, 1990; Goodson, 1994). These studies advocate a broader focus looking beyond solely 'practice' into teachers' lives and the context in which they work. Thus, researchers have addressed issues such as the vulnerability of beginning teachers (Bullough, 1995), the micro-politics of beginning teacher socialisation (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002), contextual factors that influence teachers' work and effectiveness (Day and Gu, 2007).

Attention has also been paid to induction as a comprehensive process of systematic support and assessment and to the characteristics of effective induction programmes across different contexts (Christie, Draper and O'Brien, 2003; McNally, 2006; Britton, Paine, Pimm and Raizen, 2003). Britton, Raizen, Paine and Huntley (2003) suggest that beginning teachers tend to have more needs than teacher induction

programmes address and they thus call for (a) more variety of induction activities that allow individual and local flexibility, and (b) more extensive research into the process of induction.

Features of studies dominant in the Western English-language literature include the conceptualisation of the teaching profession as beyond technicality and the recognition of the multi-faced and multi-dimensional nature of professional learning and development for beginning teachers (Hargreaves, 1998; McNally, Boreham, Cope and Stronach, 2009). For China, the extensive changes of recent decades, the education reforms linked to these changes and the declared importance of education to China's future together with the disparity between regions due to economic, cultural and historical factors make the country an interesting site for inquiry into teacher induction. In addition, increasing awareness of the need for a humanistic approach in looking at teaching indicates that research is required in this sphere (Huang, 2004; Lo, 2000; Xu, 2009). This study will therefore attempt to explore existing induction practice in China, through a case study in one local setting. In doing so, it will draw on and at the same time critique the Western English language literature that dominates both research and discourse on teacher induction, worldwide.

1.2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

The term 'induction' is relatively new to Chinese teachers and as a concept it is largely imported from Western literature (Ma, 1992). Of course, schools in China have a tradition of developing and implementing in-service training activities for beginning teachers that are equivalent to induction programmes in the western context. In this thesis, I will explore teacher induction in China primarily through the lens of western English language theories and concepts.

Lu (2001: 251) argues that, 'while in daily life we are Chinese, in our studies we are Westerners, accepting and adopting Western concepts, theories and approaches. Under such circumstances we are only able to ape Westerners at every step'. Lu (2001) speaks from the position that previous Chinese experiences of colonialism,

westernisation and sovietisation have seen simplistic transplant of trends based on western theories.

Yang (2004) agrees with Lu's position in suggesting that such actions may have hindered Chinese social sciences researchers' capacity to establish a position of importance in the field of educational research. She suggests a movement of self-reflection in response to western dominated positivistic conceptualisation of social studies and thus calls for educational research that is consistent with its own cultural origins.

These comments are valuable but seemingly unfair in certain aspects. It is – for example – an exaggeration to suggest that the western concept of social science studies is predominantly positivistic. As a matter of fact, 'the interpretive turn' against the positivistic paradigm, although relatively new, is also a western invention and different approaches to social research that share the basic principles of interpretivism are also increasingly informing the educational research in the west (Howe, 1998).

It is especially difficult to pursue indigenisation in the Chinese context from a methodological standpoint. In the case of research on beginning teachers, Ma (1992) suggests that most publications in China concerning beginning teachers are usually practitioners or researchers sharing their ideas, insights, notions or best practice. These are invaluable to beginning teachers for reference but nevertheless lack of validity and reliability in the methodological sense.

Therefore, for this study, the purpose is not to shy away from western theories and concepts in studying Chinese teachers but to explore teachers' lives through these useful theoretical themes and methods with an awareness that these theoretical conceptions and methods are rooted in the western experience and thus require critical reflection.

This will require attention to what Lu (2001) suggests as characteristic of indigenous Chinese educational thought, an emphasis on collective rather than individual interests. Wang (1996) argues that Chinese intellectuals are traditionally allied to official ideologies with tight control from central government in regulating intellectual and ideological directions. Hence, with the assistance of different western ideologies embedded in their theories and concepts, it would be possible to form an alternative perspective by which a researcher could explore and reflect on the hidden premise of local experiences.

The significance of this study lies in its theoretical and practical objectives. Theoretically, I intend to utilise the advantages of a narrative approach to explore the extent to which the beginning teachers change their perceptions of and attitudes toward themselves during the first year of teaching and adapt to the cultures of their workplaces, and to consider under what conditions do the changes, if any, take place. With great emphasis on individual differences and local context, the findings, hopefully, will contribute to enriching the existing theoretical themes by accommodating critical review of the relevance of these western theories and concepts to the Chinese context. From a practical perspective, I hope to have a better understanding of the induction programmes in Yinchuan, the expressed needs and ideas of beginning teachers and hence to provide strategies and suggestions that might be relevant to new teacher induction in the chosen context of study.

1.3. Research Questions

Local education authorities and schools in China are required to design and implement an effective program that meets all the legislative mandates while providing high support for the new teachers. It is especially essential in a time when the wider context and the nature of teacher's work are changing rapidly. The accountability pressures for teachers, and for administrators to staff classrooms with qualified teachers, were put in motion by curriculum reform since 2002 and professionalization has required states and schools to emphasize and invest in teacher induction programmes. **The first overarching question** therefore seeks to explore

the implementation of induction policy by listening to the voice of different stakeholders.

A. How do beginning teachers, mentoring teachers, principals, and local authority staff perceive the induction programme offered to the beginning teachers?

This question can be answered by sub-questions such as:

1. What are the assumptions and directives of the induction policy and what is local education department and schools' interpretation of this policy?
2. What are new teachers' expectations and perceptions regarding the induction provided to them?

By trying to identify some of the social, situated, and professional factors that are influential in shaping the beginning teacher's sense of identity and by looking at the elements of the existing induction programme, the goals of the study, are also to have better understanding of the expressed needs and ideas of teachers and to provide strategies and suggestions that support both the theoretical and practical objectives of the induction programme. My aim is not to provide definitive answers to the questions but rather to contribute to the developing empirical and theoretical knowledge base within the area of teacher induction in China.

The second overarching question is intended to explore the extent to which the beginning teachers change their teaching perspectives brought to the first year of teaching and adapt to the cultures of their workplaces, and to consider under what conditions do changes, if any, take place.

B. To what extent do beginning teachers' perceptions of and attitudes toward themselves as teachers and professional learning change during their induction year?

This question can be answered by sub-questions such as:

1. How do teachers make sense of their evolving professional identity at the beginning and at the end of the school year?

2. How do teachers' sense of professional identity relate to their perceptions and attitudes towards early professional learning and development?
3. What are the factors that influence teachers' sense of professional identity?

1.4. Theoretical Framework for the Study

The term "Identity" or "Self" is relevant here. Symbolic interactionists understand this term as a process through which the individuals integrate into a particular social system by socializing themselves with "symbolic universals" such as signs and symbols, or codes and regulations, or in teachers' case, public image of teachers, prescribed professional roles and responsibilities, and professional standards (Sachs, 2003; Casey, 1995). Identity is essential here because it is also a structure which allows a consistent and continuing personality system to be constructed when an individual is experiencing changing biographical conditions or in different roles. It is a process of self-identification through differentiation for individuals to be recognized and be recognized by others (Casey, 1995).

It should be noted that 'the self is a process rather than a system of mechanisms and needs' (Casey, 1995: 58). It is influenced by the wider social context and broader social conditions in which teachers live and work. In turn, as Wenger (1998) emphasizes, the profound connection between identity and practice, identity also has great impact, either positively or negatively, on "teachers' sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness" (Day et al., 2006: 601).

More importantly, identity is not fixed. Day and Gu (2007) studied the variations in the conditions for teachers' professional learning and found that identities are neither 'intrinsically stable nor intrinsically fragmented' (Day et al, 2006: 601). Rather, the stability of teacher identities is affected by the personal, situated, and professional dimensions of the context, for example, at different stages of life or career.

Given the close connection between teachers' identity and their practice and commitment, therefore, it is necessary to investigate into the factors and the elements

that are influencing the context in which the formulation and remodeling of identity occur.

For beginning teachers, the induction year is a crucial time for them to overcome the “reality or praxis shock” (Kelchtermanns & Ballet, 2002) and to establish credibility and gain recognition (Draper & O’Brien, 2006). For example, Goodson (2003: 22) suggests that recognition by colleagues and principal, as well as by students and parents have positive impact on building an active workplace condition which is a very crucial element in teachers’ professional self.

Furthermore, Bullough (1997, Cited in Draper & O’Brien, 2006: 8) points out that new teachers, while they may be passive and receptive in a sense, still bring their own experience and beliefs to the table. On the other hand, Nias (1989: 38-39) suggests that teachers, although they may have a well-established image of themselves before they entered the profession, do not always see themselves as only teachers. Nias quotes one of her interviewees: “my other interests enrich me; I am not one hundred per cent a teacher;” As Zeichner & Tabachnick (1985) note, new teachers are shaping the institutions they work in while also being shaped by it.

However, it is worth asking to what extent will they maintain or change the ‘image of a teacher’ they perceived before they step into the reality of the classroom and to what extent can they keep the liberal edge and be away from playing it safe, as there are many empirical studies which support the belief that beginning teachers drive away from being students with liberal ideas toward teachers who socialize themselves into the traditional school patterns (Lacey, 1977).

Day and Gu (2007) argue that the previous studies, mainly focus on one particular aspect of learning, failed to recognize that teachers’ commitment and effectiveness are largely dependent on the conditions where teachers’ professional learning take place. Their study, the VITAE project (Variations in the Conditions for Teachers’ Professional Learning and Development), adopted a holistic perspective in investigating teachers’ work, lives and effectiveness, and found that the success of

professional development ('planned interventions in teachers' learning lives') appeared to be dependent upon the opportunities for professional learning ('unplanned, unrewarded, and often implicit') which occur in their everyday context (Day and Gu, 2007: 430).

This finding echoes Smith's concept of informal learning. According to Smith (2005), informal learning refers to the lifelong process in which people learn from everyday experience. For new teachers, their professional learning includes both formal and informal, but crucial learning usually takes the form of informal through an emotional process in a relational context in which a sense of self or identity develops (McNally, 2006). This argument in turn supports Day and his associates' finding that the interactions between socio-emotional factors, personal factors and organisational/situated factors that shape teachers' sense of professional identity have a significant influence on teachers' commitment to professional learning and development.

It is also important to note that the one-size-fits-all approach to induction may not meet the needs of all teachers due to different routes (traditional and alternative) and employment status (formally employed teachers or special teaching post holder) by which new teachers enter the profession (see Appendix I).

This thesis utilises the advantages of a narrative approach to study beginning teachers' lives in an attempt to reveal the complex nature of beginning teacher learning and development and the multi-faceted nature of professional identity construction. Holstein and Gubrium (2000: 104) suggest that considering identity through the lens of narrative analysis could allow researchers to 'analyze the relation between the *hows* and *whats* of storytelling', and at the same time, engage storytellers in the process of the construction of narratives. This study, therefore, aligns with the premises of narrative studies which extend the 'interpretive turn' in social sciences in acknowledging the limitation of realist assumptions to study social life and gives attention to understand how respondents in interviews attach meaning to or impose order on composing their accounts of experiences, actions and events.

By doing so, narrative studies open up the forms of telling about experience that reveal not only ‘the content to which language refers’ but also who was the storyteller and why was his/her story told that way (Riessman, 1993). In Chapter 3, a detailed discussion of why a narrative approach is well-suited for the general purpose of this study will be provided.

1.5. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into three major sections:

Part I: Literature Review and Research Design

Part I of this thesis consists of three chapters. **Chapter 1** provides an introduction to this study. It starts with a statement of the problems followed by the purpose and significance of the study. Research questions are then stated and the theoretical setting for this study is briefly described.

Chapter 2 first introduces the Chinese context including the policy environment and the induction of new teachers in China. It then takes a close look at Western theories of beginning teacher development and utilises Maslow’s (1968) hierarchy of needs as an organizing framework to locate studies on beginning teachers and to highlight their potential needs. The concept of beginning teacher induction in Western literature is then introduced with a discussion of the characteristics of comprehensive induction programmes. This chapter then moves on to introduce the main theoretical themes that have influenced the author’s research design and data analysis process.

Chapter 3 includes the nature and the method of enquiry. It also presents the author’s attempt to sharpen the research tool by combining narrative interviews with topical interviews. Participant selection and data collection procedure is also described with details. This chapter then presents the analytical approach using one participant’s interview transcript as example to illustrate the analysis process, followed by a discussion of generalisation, validity, reliability and ethical issues.

Part II: Analysis of Findings and Discussion

The two overarching research questions in this study and their sub-questions guided the attempt to explore beginning teachers' evolving perceptions of themselves and their induction experiences as they embarked on the journey of the first year of their teaching career. The findings and analysis of the interview data from beginning teachers, mentoring teachers and principals, and LEA staff will be expanded in the subsequent sections.

The first overarching question focuses on how to beginning teachers, participating support providers, principals, and local authority staff perceive the induction programme offered to the beginning teachers. **Chapter 4** aims to provide answers **to the first overarching question** and its sub questions which aim to understand local education department and schools' interpretation of the assumptions and directives of the induction policy, and new teachers' expectations and perceptions regarding the induction. It focuses on exploring the beginning teacher induction system in Yinchuan city and the implementation of the induction programme by listening to the voice the participants. This chapter utilises the data collected from the topical interview design which provided a set of relatively standardised questions in relation to the induction programme. A brief overview of the city and induction programme will be followed by an analysis of the data disaggregated by each sub-question. Chapter 4 also aims to set the context in which analysis on individual teachers' views which will take place in Chapter 5, 6 and 7.

Chapter 5, 6 and 7 respond to **the second overarching question** which explores the extent to which the beginning teachers change their perspectives about teaching brought to the first year of teaching and adapt to the culture of their workplace. These chapters, attempting to provide answers through the sub questions including how do teachers make sense of their evolving professional identity at the beginning and at the end of the school year, how do teachers' sense of professional identity relate to their perceptions and attitudes towards early professional learning and development, and what are the factors that influence teachers' sense of professional identity, provide individual examination of the three main themes, namely job

motivation, self-image, and subjective education theories, which are emerged from the analysis of the data collected from the narrative interview design which utilises theoretically informed open-questions to invite participating beginning teachers to tell their own stories.

Each chapter reframes the participants' narratives according to the sub-themes of each main theme and reconstructs the narratives in the form of the **Phase One Interviews** and **Phase Two Interviews** in an attempt to reveal the temporal and changing aspect of teachers' perceptions and representations. Each chapter starts with an overview of the literature review chapter and further literature that are more relevant to the main theme of each chapter in order to set the theoretically sensitive context in which my reconstruction of participants' narratives and interpretation of participants' narratives can be understood and supported. The analysis of each sub-theme in each chapter also begins with a short review of literature since the issues with beginning teacher induction and development should be subject to the examination in a more complex theoretical environment as different theories and research findings all lend themselves to my understanding and interpretation of. Teachers' narratives acquired from Phase One and Phase Two interviews are presented in separate sections in an attempt to show case the process of changes, if any, that my participants experienced. It concludes with a summary and discussion with further examination of the connection between the findings and the relevant literature on developing teachers' professional identity.

Chapter 5 takes the analysis to the common themes identified through interviews with beginning teachers in responding to the second over-arching research question. This chapter mainly focuses on teacher motivation including their motivation in taking part in teacher education and in becoming a teacher.

Chapter 6 pays attention to teachers' self-image by exploring how teachers viewed themselves in relation to the significant others. This chapter also presents how teachers' pre-conceptions and perceptions of who they were and what kind of

teachers they wanted to become changed or stayed the same by providing teachers' stories in both Phase One and Phase Two interviews to reveal the process of change.

Chapter 7 attempts to explore teachers' subjective educational theories behind their motivation and self-images, and more importantly, the extent to which these theories they brought with them at the beginning of their career change as they experienced the first year of teaching.

Part III: Conclusion

Chapter 8 concludes the study by summarizing the findings in response to the two research questions. In this chapter, limitations to this research in terms of validity, reliability and generalisation considerations with regard to research methodology and methods, and data collection and analysis are also discussed. Recommendations are then made for teacher induction and education and further research on beginning teachers.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the issues that inform this qualitative case study. For this study, literature searches were conducted in three main areas: a) the official Chinese policy and relevant literature on policy and practice in teacher education and employment; b) the research and discursive literatures on teacher induction in China; c) the Western discursive and research literature concerning teacher induction. Both Chinese and English literature were searched using key words including English terms such as new teacher orientation, induction and mentoring, and Chinese terms such as *ruzhi peixun* (teacher induction) and *xinjiaoshi peixun/fazhan* (training and development for new teachers).

The first part of the literature review (2.2) gives a brief overview of the relevant policy changes in relation to teacher education and teacher employment with regard to decentralization, professionalization, and the new curriculum reform, aiming to establish the policy context in which new teachers work. It then moves on to a specific focus on studies on teacher induction in China. However, this section mainly reports findings of Paine, Fang and Wilson's (2003) study as there was limited information on the topic in the Chinese literature. As Ma (1992) points out, most available information on induction were concerned with positive experience or knowledge share rather than studies that report valid and reliable findings.

The second part of the literature review (2.3) centres on the extensive studies on teacher induction and new teacher development in Western/English language literature. In order to give a structure to the review section, I use Maslow's (1968) Hierarchy of Needs to present studies on teacher induction that have different focuses. The third part (2.4) examines the concept of induction as conceptualised in the Western English language literature. And the fourth part (2.5) presents the emerging theoretical themes based on the studies on teacher induction through the lens of professional identity development and narrative studies which have informed the theoretical framework and methodology of this study. The literature review

concludes with a summary which tries to integrate the issues explored in Chinese literature with the emerging themes concluded from Western literature.

2.2. The Chinese Context

Teaching is no longer, if it ever was, an activity which takes place behind closed doors. It is subject to central control and direction, is answerable to multiple agencies and has to respond to the expectations and needs of a rapidly changing society (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington and Gu, 2007: 3).

For these reasons, as Day etc (2007) suggest, in order to explore and understand beginning teachers' perceptions, it is important to sketch the broad policy and social contexts, as well as the particular school contexts which might have influenced them. This part of the chapter, therefore, takes a selective look at the Chinese central government policies and regulations which are relevant to my study.

2.2.1. Decentralization and Its Impact on Teacher Education

China's higher education was guided and run by the 'centralist model' (Lo, 2000). The major features of the 'centralist model', which still have impacts on current teacher education system, can be characterized by four key functions held by the central government: namely, (1) providing funding based on government budget plan; (2) setting national student enrolment rate and enrolment number for each institution; (3) appointing senior management teams; (4) authorizing all new academic units, programmes and curriculum (Lo, 2000).

With the introduction of the market economy and open-door policy in the 1990s, the Chinese government has made great efforts to make the transition from a centrally planned system to a socialist market economy. The implication of the transition for the economy, legal and education systems, as for the culture and society as a whole is to a degree obvious. The inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the administration system was identified as the major problem which had caused Chinese education to lag behind that of developed countries. It was noted that government control of schools and universities was too rigid and management inefficient; and that authority should be devolved to lower levels in terms of designing curriculum and choosing teaching methods and text books, etc (Hawkins, 2000; Lo, 2000).

Although there are different definitions of what constitutes decentralization, the three forms of decentralization identified by Hanson (1998: 112) offers a useful way of looking at the transfer of decision-making authority, responsibility and tasks from higher to lower levels in China:

1. Deconcentration (which involves transfer of tasks and work to the lower level but not authority);
2. Delegation (which involves transfer of decision-making authority from higher to lower levels, but authority can be withdrawn by the delegating unit);
3. Devolution (which involves transfer of authority to an autonomous unit which can act independently without permission from the centre);

Hawkins (2000) suggests that several of these forms exist in China's case and Hanson (1998) argues that devolution, in the long run, is a more effective method because it provides for continuity in the change process. Deconcentration and delegation, however, are more common forms in China insofar as the state is consciously retreating from being the sole provider of social services but is always followed by a re-centralization to retrench, fearing loss of control. As a result, centralized decision-making system has given strong power to its leaders and the newly appointed or replacement educational leaders retract authority depending on their motivations of the moment and this has made the policies unstable.

As a result of decentralization measures, teacher education in China has witnessed unprecedented changes including rapid expansion of enrolment, and innovation and structural system reorganization. Until the early 1990s, the normal colleges and universities (teacher education colleges and universities) used to be the only legal organizations to prepare and train teachers. Teacher education was provided separately by two independent systems of institutions. The system of pre-service teacher education was composed of four types of institutions at three tiers while the system of in-service teacher education consisted of training in the three-level organization. The systems were separated thoroughly, teacher preparation and

training was implemented by institutions of the two systems, respectively. All of the institutions together constituted a huge, independent and closed system in charge of preparing or training teachers at different levels, and meeting the education needs of different school tiers.

In 1999, Decision about Deepening the Reform of Education and Boosting the Quality of Education promulgated at the Third National Conference of Education first officially encouraged non-normal (non-teacher education) and comprehensive universities to engage in teacher preparation in order to cope with the challenges put on the teaching force due to the rapid change caused by the knowledge economy, globalization and information technology development. Several new models of pre-service teacher preparation (See Appendix 2) have been designed.

In 2001, the State Council delivered an Executive Circular, Decision about Reform and Development of Basic Education, where the concept of ‘Teacher Education’ was adopted for the first time to replace the previous term of ‘Normal Education’ (Shi & Englert, 2008). The transformation impacted positively on teacher education for the reason that it recognized the career-long continuum of professional development. It also promoted changes in the cultivation models of pre-service teacher education.

However, the comprehensive universities, with little fundamental change in their infrastructure, take up new duties and responsibilities with no previous experience and sufficient support. Many of the new teachers they have trained turned out to be of low quality. The in-service teachers they have retrained do not meet the required standards. Many teachers have found themselves unable to keep up with the demands of social and educational development (Xu, 2009).

2.2.2. Professionalization, Quality Education and Curriculum Reform

In 1993 the National People’s Congress passed the Teacher Act (or Teacher’s Law), which for the first time recognized the legal status of teaching as a profession. The teacher certification system was also established in this Act, specifying the minimum requirements for coming into the teaching profession including required educational

credential, teacher qualification, and demonstrable teaching competence. It also requires teachers to comply with the Chinese Law and Regulations, and demonstrate strong moral and ethical character as well as an enthusiasm for teaching (Zhou & Reed, 2005:206).

To improve teachers' professional development and teachers' working conditions, a set of solutions was specified by the Chinese government. For example, it paid more attention to teachers' economic status by addressing teacher salaries and benefits. It stated that teachers' average salary should not be under or over that of the civil servants. Special allowances should be paid by the government to elementary and secondary school teachers, with extra allowances provided to expert teachers and teachers in minority and poorer regions. The Act required the government to set preferential policies for teachers to solve housing problems and their children's schooling issues and stated that teachers would share the same medical insurance as civil servants (Zhou & Reed, 2005: 207).

The Action Plan to Revitalize Education in the 21st Century submitted in 1999 took the meaning of professionalization in China to a whole new level. Professionalization, hereby, was considered to be an effective means of assuring teacher quality by establishing professional standards, such as the establishment of Regulation of Teacher Education. Another highlight of the Action Plans was the proposal of establishing a lifelong learning system for the workforce by improving vocational and continuing education system.

Prior to the curriculum reform, in-service teacher education were usually university-based. The Circularization of Requirements on the New Curriculum Reform Experimentation issued by the Ministry of Education in 2003 also introduced 'school-based' training model and encouraged teachers to actively involve in professional development activities. A variety of forms of teacher training models, such as school-based training, action research, partnerships in providing training, distance and E-learning, have then been designed by universities and schools to support the professionalization process. Inviting academics or expert teachers to

school to give series of lecture or demonstration to teachers has been one of the most popular models (Department of Teacher Education, 2001; Xu, 2009: 64).

One of the key aims of professionalization of the teaching profession is to improve the quality of basic education provided to the pupils in order to cope with external challenges, e.g. globalization, information technology development, competition between nations, and internal challenges, e.g. the increasing gap between the more advanced and less developed areas, social equity, and national economic development (Sun, 2003). What happens at primary and secondary schools is that learning seems to prepare for countless examinations only. “In many ways, China's education is divorced from the reality and therefore needs to be improved,” says Zhu Muju, an official in charge of elementary education in Ministry of Education (Zhu, 2006: 1).

Thus, government documents such as New Curriculum Reform for Basic Education, Use of Information Technology for Teacher Education, and Development Policies for the Western Region of China stress the needs of providing ‘Quality Education’ by improving the quality of teacher education and the teaching force (Ministry of Education, 2002, 2006).

The slogan of ‘Quality Education’ in China is adopted as the antithesis of ‘Examination-Oriented’ education to emphasize the all-round development of students as whole persons (Lo, 2000). Quality education has become a must given the current school practice of prioritizing knowledge-based learning and academic performance and neglecting cognitive development, innovative and critical thinking, moral and political education, as well as aesthetic and physical education (Zhou, 2004).

Acknowledging that the nature and structure of curriculum should change along with social changes promoted by rapid technological advance and economic development, in 1999, the Basic Education Department of the Ministry of Education advocated to establish a new ‘child-oriented’ curriculum that promotes over-all development of

students and that links the textbook knowledge to the real world settings. In the same year, the state council declared the *Decision on the Deepening of Educational Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality Education* showed the direction and drew the blueprint of the curriculum reform and development for establishing a vital socialistic education with Chinese characteristics in the 21st century (Huang, 2004: 103). The reform tries to adjust the goals (see Appendix 3) and for different stages of basic education, and to revise the teaching methodology, teaching materials, teachers' training system, teacher and student evaluation and curriculum plan and development system.

As to teachers, they were faced with overwhelming challenges, three of them, identified by Robinson and Yi (2009), seem to be representative here:

1. The national curriculum reform with new content and new teaching material for teachers. The new curriculum also requires new teaching methods and new mind-sets, from teacher-centred to learner-centred;
2. The need for less-qualified teachers to be upgraded in order to reach new minimum standards of qualification; the need for continuous professional development for teachers to grasp the theoretical basis and the content of the curriculum reform to promote effective instruction and teaching;
3. The new and unfamiliar use of ICT and internet resources, especially difficult for teachers in rural and western China, is now seen as a means of modernizing education.

The reform aims at shifting students' roles from passive receivers to active learners. Many experimental studies and experiments such as 'active teaching, social practice, independent study, learning by discovery, learning by mastery, co-operative learning, and problem-solving' have been designed and carried out in schools to realize the aim. Therefore, the reform emphasizes that teachers should be changing their roles of 'master of the knowledge and the classroom' to 'organizers' and 'advisors' of students by making full use of textbooks and other curriculum resources (Huang, 2004).

The traditional teaching methods and routine tasks can no longer meet the new expectations raised by 'Quality Education'. Teachers are expected to reconstruct the contents and methods of their teaching. This would entail applying subject knowledge to the lives of students, opening up the disciplinary boundaries of their subjects to nurture a more comprehensive understanding of the world, and designing new ways of assessing learning outcomes (Lo, 2000: 242).

Although the innovations of the curriculum reform are winning applause, debates continue. On one hand, the government has set basic requirement for qualified teachers and established in-service training programmes in hope of improving the quality of teachers to support the 'Quality Education' campaign and the curriculum reform. Hirst pointed out that "curriculum planning is not just a question of whether what is learnt is worthwhile; it is a question of whether or not what we wish to be learnt is in fact being learnt" (Hirst, 1974: 5). Therefore, the problem here is that there is no systematic evaluation and monitoring mechanisms for teacher performances and curriculum implementation, or for reflection on the purpose of education and the content and methods of teaching as promoted by the curriculum reform.

On the other, although the curriculum reform was carried out first in 5 pilot zones before its nationwide implementation, the reform is still initiated mainly through a top-down approach 'aimed at improving the quality of schooling without sacrificing bureaucratic control' (Lo, 2000: 240).

As a result, Xu (2009) noted that the top-down approach has not been as successful as the policy makers anticipated because the school administrators and teachers remain to be passive recipients of the policy as only a few of them are involved in the process of conceptualization and design of educational policies. Moreover, based on her study on school-based teacher development, she also questioned the extent to which the national teacher retraining could be sufficient for supporting teachers' understanding and involvement in implementing the new national curriculum. And the teaching methods adopted by teachers remain to be conservative because of the

ineffective training as well as the on-going emphasis on student achievements which are solely assessed by examinations.

2.2.3. Teacher Induction

During a press briefing in 2007, the director of Teacher Education Department at Ministry of Education of China, Mr. Guan Zhiqiang put forward the ‘old problems’ of China’s teacher education and training system again. The three problems he emphasized were teachers’ professional competence, teacher shortage, and teacher treatment.

Followed by his Teachers’ Day Speech on 10th September 2007, Mr. Guan Zhiqiang raised the question of how to support professional development of primary and secondary school teachers based upon a set of data collected by the Ministry of Education which suggest that more than 300,000 teachers across China do not possess adequate qualifications to support their teaching.

In dealing with the challenges emerged with the curriculum reform, starting from 2005, all teachers are required by the Ministry of Education to participate in a minimum of 40 periods of pre-service training aiming to familiarize the teachers with the new curriculum as well as the philosophical foundations, teaching and learning theories and policy behind it.

Paine, Fang and Wilson’s (2003) study on teacher induction in Shanghai portrayed an overview of the system as well as the policy and wider culture behind it. Shanghai adopted standard approach towards teacher induction with formal policy and school practices for teachers at their first-year teachers as well as on-going support for their beginning period (see Appendix 4). For those teachers who did not participate in prior formal pre-service teacher education, a special arrangement of a minimum of forty hours training covering pedagogy, psychology, subject-area methods and ethics is required.

As Ma (1992) comments, induction in China is regarded as the responsibility of the local educational community and the school faculty, rather than merely of new teachers working on their own. A top-down educational system overlooks and involves in induction with Shanghai Municipal Education Commission at the top. Shanghai's educational authorities recognize induction as an important phase of teacher's professional development. Rather than an isolated programme, induction is built within the large continuum of teacher development that covers pre-service education, induction, in-service training opportunities (Paine, Fang and Wilson, 2003). Their research findings also raised several issues.

Firstly, the focus of induction is guidance and training with clear and consistent goals and target outcomes. Through various processes and forms of guidance, the novice teachers are expected to shorten the period of transition and to perform at the level of the more experienced ones. Although the arrangement of induction is not 'sink or swim' in nature, but it is argued that traditional didactic assumptions of learning which suppose that those who are responsible for providing support and guidance to new teachers know exactly where the novice should head are drawn.

Secondly, it seems that novice teachers are supported to be able to perform as strong as the experienced teachers in the existing mold rather than be encouraged to create new approached of teaching and learning. As a result, "induction here ascribes perhaps less of an active role to the learner than other arrangements might encourage", says Paine, Fang and Wilson (2003: 79), "...is the difficulty of helping new teachers develop reform-minded practices in a context of induction, constructed as it is in this setting".

Thirdly, considering the variety of characters involved and the complex nature of professional learning, it is difficult to ensure the quality of guidance received by the novice. Paine, Fang and Wilson (2003) point out that these complex activities and relationships provide room for improvement, as well as the possibility of poor performance.

Fourthly, Shanghai is facing the challenge of developing ‘a sustaining system’ for induction within the continuum of teacher development (Pain, Fang and Wilson, 2003: 77). The current system is criticized to be inefficient since the pre-service and in-service education and training are independent from each other. The effort has been made to build a single system of life-long learning, but the exploration of better partnerships between multiple stakeholders faces policy block and insufficient support.

Moreover, there are quite limited opportunities for pre-service students to have actual classroom experiences, therefore, induction programmes are considered to be an essential component for novices to develop their professional expertise, especially in teaching and classroom management. However, the effectiveness of the induction is assumed rather than based on evidence since neither relevant stakeholders have carried out systematic evaluation of the impact of the induction (Britton, Paine, Pimm and Raizen, 2003: 300).

Last but not the least, in a period of curriculum reform, the education system pursues quality education and is up against the traditional examination-oriented education which is deeply rooted into the nation’s culture. The reform of curriculum touches upon teaching materials, pedagogy and assessment which require teachers to learn new ways and content of teaching. Due to the unclear vision of the practice of this innovation, the pursuit of quality education poses great challenges for both new teachers and teacher trainers.

In a relatively unified and contrived context of curriculum and teaching organization, Shanghai’s case reflects China’s induction system in miniature, only with its own complex contextual features. It could be a helpful reference for exploring induction arrangements in Ningxia, a Hui people (Muslim) autonomous region, which is located in northwest of China and is considered to be economically under-developed comparing to coastal cities such as Shanghai. However, the disparity between areas puts forward the common issue of inequity, especially in resources distribution.

Teachers are provided with more induction opportunities by wealthier administrative bodies and schools in Shanghai than teachers work in poorer areas.

Induction in Ningxia might also be facing other challenges. Due to the decline of student population, the total number of primary and secondary school teacher has exceeded the planned number authorized by the central government. As a result of the university expansion, it becomes very difficult for university graduates to find a job. In 2008 the employment rate for new university graduates was 70% and the estimate rate for 2009 is only 35% (Fang and Zhu, 2009). The CPC Central Committee and the State Council made a strategic move in 2006 to construct teachers' team by encouraging new university graduates to take on special teaching posts (see Appendix 1) in the rural and underdeveloped areas. Ningxia provincial government made adjustment to the policy by adopting the special teaching posts strategy to city schools which has played a significant role in helping university graduates seek employment. The effect and impact of such strategy is still to be explored.

2.2.4. Summary

Reform broke the monopoly of normal universities and colleges in training teachers. However, the downside is that, with little fundamental change in the infrastructure, the training institutions and local schools take up new duties and responsibilities with no previous experience and sufficient support to induct teachers who come to the profession through different routes.

The other issue is that, given the employment condition in China, new teachers are often so pleased to have a job that they tend not to complain about the conditions of employment or their induction. As Schempp, Sparkes, and Templin (1999: 158) point out, 'economic conditions continue to pressure new teachers to forsake their ideals and practices learned in preparation programmes in favour of accepting the present conditions and standards of the schools'.

Moreover, the professionalism promoted by Chinese government is similar to the kinds of professionalism that Sachs (2003) refers to as ‘managerial professionalism’ with increasing and dominant government control over the teaching force through policy directives creating a tension between government control and professional autonomy of the teaching profession. She questions about the extent to which a more active notion of teacher professionalism can be encouraged within the managerial discourses.

Current reforms in China focus on the production functions of schooling to improve the quantity and quality of skills in the labour force, which are normally evaluated by students’ achievement. More importantly, teachers are considered to be ‘the villains’ who are responsible for the failing of children and schools. Ironically, blaming teachers for everything, most of the reforms seem to ignore teachers as active actors. Levin (1980, cited in Carnoy, 1999: 71) argues that student achievement is more likely to be influenced by teachers and their commitment to teaching. Carnoy (1999: 71) agrees and suggests that ‘teacher commitment and involvement implies a management system that takes teacher needs into account and involves their participation in improving the quality of education.’

Lastly, Britton, Paine, Pimm and Raizen’s (2003) study on induction in Shanghai provides useful information. However, the representativeness of the case in Shanghai is questionable, giving the developed status and financial capability of the region. Studies of other regions in China are needed to provide richer knowledge of the induction system in China.

2.3. Review of a Selection of the Western English Language Literature

2.3.1. Overview

This section presents the literature searches on research and discursive materials on new teacher induction in Western/English language literature. It starts with an overview of the conceptualisation of beginning teacher development with regard to career and developmental stages. It then moves on to identifying the needs and challenges reported by new teachers in studies on teacher induction. By doing so, it

hopes to add to the limited information on new teachers and induction in the Chinese literature and put new teachers at the centre of attention.

Bullough (1989), based on an in-depth study of how beginning teachers go through the first year of teaching, provides a four stages of development: fantasy stage, survival stage, mastery stage, and impact stage. He argues that new teachers, during the fantasy stage, usually hold more idealistic attitudes towards teaching and their teaching career developed, dreaming of becoming the kind of teacher that could change people's lives. However, the dreams shatter somehow when they come to the survival stage where they face the difficulty of classroom management, student discipline and the complexity of school politics, where they came across reality shock that cause many beginning teachers to panic. Through a process of fitting-in and learning, the new teachers improve their instructional skills and build up confidence that enable them to move to the stage of mastery. However, research in teacher socialization of teachers show conservative influence of the first year teaching on new entrants that they witness a shift from more idealistic attitudes towards traditional attitudes, from more progressive view of teaching to conventional perspectives of teaching (Lacey, 1977; Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1985). In the last stage, the impact stage, the new teachers could concentrate more on improving instructional skills and professional growth.

Berliner (2001), focus on teacher expertise, proposes a five-stage journey of how new teachers become expert teachers: novice stage, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert stage. He suggests that during the pre-service training, student teachers are taught context-free rules and elements of performance. During the novice stage, new teachers have to be able to identify the context-free elements and rules from the real-world experience within specific situations. The advanced beginner is able to meld experience with verbal knowledge and change behaviours according to context but still lack a certain responsibility for their actions. Teachers in the competent stage are able to make rational choices such as planning and prioritising. They hold more responsibility for what happens around them, and therefore, are more emotionally involved with the success and the failure of their

decisions and actions. However, the competent performers are less flexible and reflective in their behaviours. Berliner argues that at the proficient stage, 'the intuition and know-how become prominent' (2001: 23). The expert performers are more 'arational' that they are capable of manipulate their behaviour based on their tacit knowledge and an intuitive reaction of the appropriate response. Just like jazz musicians improvise, a state of knowledge in action described by Schon (1983).

Tickle (2001) argues that it is wrong to assume smooth and automatic transition and progression from one stage to another. Nevertheless, the point made by Bullough and Berliner is that it is unfair to look at beginning teachers as 'finished products' (Imig and Imig, 2006: 1). As Draper et al (1997) note that even the most prepared new teachers still find themselves in need for support. Berliner (2001: 21) suggests that new teachers are at a stage where only minimal skill should be expected as 'they are learning the objective features and facts of situation and gaining experience'.

It is therefore clear that learning to teach is developmental. But beginning teachers are still expected to manage full assignments. Bullough (1989: 17) notes that 'human development defies easy categorisation. It is seldom smooth, never conflict free, and frequently characterised by backsliding' and that these challenges of being a new teacher, if not solved properly, can create obstacles such as teacher burnout (Gold, 1996), influence their professional development, or even drive them away from the teaching career (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Therefore, what exactly do new teachers need to meet these challenges? The next part use Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of needs as a useful theoretical template to addresses the needs of new teachers.

However difficult the beginning is, new teachers are being held the same responsibilities for student learning and same expectations for their performance as their more seasoned colleagues. In order to better support the new teachers, the first logical step is to examine what are the challenges facing the new teachers and what do they need to overcome the challenges.

2.3.2. What do New Teachers Need? - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's theory about how people satisfy various personal needs in the context of their work suggests individuals' needs are arranged and satisfied in a hierarchy, a generally same sequence. According to Maslow, there are generally two levels of needs that the lower level needs which he describes as deficiency needs include physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs and esteem needs, must be satisfied in order for individuals to move up to the higher levels needs which include the needs to know and to understand, aesthetic needs, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1968).

Maslow (1968: 24-27) points out that it is difficult to define the meaning of self-actualization. However, the state of self-actualizing people could be indicated by positive cases and negative contrast. Healthy people, whose basic needs have sufficiently satisfied, are motivated by the desires to self-actualization, which can be described as a process of 'on-going actualization of potentials, capacities and talents, as fulfilment of mission, thorough which a fuller knowledge of, and acceptance of, the person's own intrinsic nature' is developed. In a practical sense, the managers, for example, usually attach a lot of importance to the higher level needs as they advance through an organization. The self-actualizing managers are driven by the need to grow in skills and competence as 'growth need strength' (Argyle, 1989: 87).

He argues that the deficiency needs can only be satisfied by other people which indicates that individuals who are driven by these lower level needs are relatively more dependent on the environment than the self-actualizing individuals. In a sense, as Maslow puts it, individuals in dependent position must be more afraid of the environment, since they are dependent variables and not in control of their own fate and they need to be flexible and responsive in order to be able to adapt themselves to the external situation (Maslow, 1968: 35).

However, Argyle (1989) argues that the motives discovered in research literature affecting work do not all fit in Maslow's hierarchy. He points out that money is the most obvious one. Moreover, Arnold, Cooper and Robertson (1995: 211) point out

some flaws of the need theory that needs don't always group up together in the way Maslow predicted and his theory fails to predict when and why particular needs would become important. Nevertheless, money, as economic incentives, is always a tricky one as it is associated with equity and fairness as well as recognition and achievement which are incentives themselves.

In his two-dimensional paradigm of factors that affecting people's work satisfaction and attitudes, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) concludes that money is among the hygiene factors that can create job dissatisfaction but are not themselves motivators. As he suggests that the hygiene factors that are extrinsic to the job include: company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security; and the growth factors that are intrinsic to the job are: achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement (Steers and Porter, 1975: 97).

His theory supports Maslow's theory that the growth motivators are usually associated with long-term positive effects and pleasure in job performance while the hygiene factors produce short-term changes in job performance and attitudes. The hygiene factors reflect individuals' relationship to the context or environment while the growth motivators reflect what a person does which is aligned with Maslow's conclusion that people driven by lower level needs are more dependent on environment (Herzberg et al., 1959: 113).

Herzberg also notes that different results were achieved when the research design aims at what satisfy people comparing to those studies concerning the factors that led to job dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959: 111). His study found that when people are asked why they were not particularly happy about their work, the answers were not usually associated with how work itself but with the company policy, the work environment, the colleague relationships and so on, hence, the hygiene factors, which are similar to Maslow's deficiency needs.

When considering the application of Maslow's theory to the Chinese context, 'ideological' criticism are also raised by Marxist scholars such as Buss (1979) and Lethbridge (1986) who argue that the excessive individualism contained in Maslow's humanist thoughts, with its emphasis on self-actualisation, serve to mask the larger questions concerning the socio-political structure of society. Elaine and Ronald (1999), on the other hand, point out that Marxist critiques are largely based on a set of apposing assumptions about the nature of individuals which overemphasize the determination of socio-political forces on the shaping of individuals. Therefore, Elaine and Ronald (1999) suggest that Maslow's theory offers an opportunity to view individuals from an 'individuality' perspective, instead of an 'individualism' perspective, that pays attention not only to the uniqueness of individuals but also to the commonality, not only to the responsibilities and roles of individuals but also to the tension between individuals and the environment.

Distinctions between Confucius conceptualisation of self-cultivation in China and Maslow's self-actualising individuals in Western humanistic approaches should also be noted. Self-cultivation is regarded as a necessary condition for societal and familial relationships to be regulated and harmonized. And as a result, Ho (1995) argues that Confucianism tends to produce people who strive to meet external moral or social criteria instead of satisfying individual needs or sentiments. The self in Chinese traditional culture, therefore, is conditioned to respond to social requirements which entail impulse control which serves to maintain a sense of status hierarchies. Looking at individuals through the lens of Maslow's theory would provide an opportunity to break out the rigidity of prescription for proper conduct in Confucius terms and give attention to expressions of emotions, feelings and the needs for critical assessment of external criteria (Ho, 1995).

Therefore, despite the inadequacies of Maslow's theory mentioned above, his work offers a useful way of looking at self-actualizing person, although he argues that few people operate at that level. He reveals the intrinsic desire for growth when individuals feel bored with the previous gratification and the new experience is subjectively more delightful and satisfying for them. 'The new experience validates

itself rather than by any outside criterion' (Maslow, 1968: 45). Herzberg et al., (1959) and Argyle (1989) both support this view by saying that many people find work intrinsically enjoyable. For example, managers in particular are much concerned with achievement and promotion as personal growth and adjustment which help them develop a growing sense of commitment and responsibility to work.

It is quite attempting to portray new teachers as self-actualizing individuals who view learning to teach as a life-long endeavour. However, like the employees in business sectors and the students they teach, the new teachers themselves have various needs. Breaux and Wang (2003) and Coffey (2008) use Maslow's (1968) deficiency needs to demonstrate that before the new teachers can move on to pursue their desire of becoming a teacher, there are needs and concerns to be dealt with. This section adopts Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a way to organize the studies on new teacher.

2.3.2.1. Physiological needs and safety needs (Breaux and Wang, 2003: 63): where is my classroom? Why doesn't someone show me where my classroom is? Where do I eat lunch and what will it cost? When do I get paid and how do I make sure that I have health insurance?

The questions above, according to Breaux and Wang (2003), are what on new teachers' minds when they first start working. Research shows that workplace conditions have great impact on teachers' quality, retention and performance. Darling-Hammond (1997) notes that the teachers are asked to teach more information at a higher cognitive level, to an increasingly diverse student population, but with little support from the system. Imig and Imig (2006) point out that some secondary beginning teachers don't even have their own classroom.

Johnson and Donaldson (2004: 106) also argues that the schools' inadequate of equipment and resources and 'the unspoken expectations' that teachers should be able to cope with the situation or buy what they need by their own together may demoralize the beginning teachers. For example, in her study, she found that many

new teachers were not provided with the basic resources they need to teach. A first-year teacher was even criticized by her principal for not having posters in her classroom even though she was not provided with the money to buy them. Based on their study on beginning teacher burnout, Goddard and associates (2006) noted that the new teachers reported that the daily routines, rules, and policies were less clarified and the school environments were less able to accommodate innovative work practices.

The findings above echo Maslow's notion of growth. He considers the process of healthy growth to be an on-going series of 'free choice situations' that confront individuals and force them to choose between 'safety and growth, dependence and independence'. The individuals will grow when the attractions of growth and the anxieties of safety are greater than the anxieties of growth and the attractions of safety (Maslow, 1968: 47). When it is applied to new teachers' situation, it means that supportive working conditions help teachers overcome the needs for safety and facilitates good teaching (Johnson and donaldson, 2004). Feiman-Nemser (2003: 25) agrees by saying that "whether the early years of teaching are a time of constructive learning or a period of coping, adjustment, and survival depends largely on the working conditions and culture of teaching that new teachers encounter". The desire for a nurturing and supportive school culture leads the teachers' need to the next level.

2.3.2.2. Love and belonging needs (Breaux and Wang, 2003: 63): who is in my grade level or department? Does anyone care about me? I haven't met anyone at the school. It's so lonely here.

One of the reasons why new teachers leave the profession, concluded by O'Brien (2004: 2), is the isolation from colleagues, although he notes that teachers in Scottish context may have select to work alone because of the dominating 'individual paradigm of teaching'. Lacey (1977: 40) considers isolation of teachers as one of the characteristics of the classroom that has impacted on the teacher's role and the school culture. He describes the traditional organization of the school as 'a series of discrete

classrooms, each with a lone teacher supported by an administrative structure'. The isolation has twofold meanings: the separation of one teacher from another; and the separation of teachers from 'other members of the teacher's role-set', for example, LEA officials and members of the community.

However, Lacey (1977) argues that with the development of the more complex structured organizations and the growing attention to the perplexing problems of the classroom, there is a growing awareness of the social context of education which broadens the teacher's role. Hobson et al (2006: 182), in their study of the process of becoming a teacher, asked the student teachers why a particular teaching post attracted them and they find that the most mentioned factors are the school ethos, the colleagues, the support offered, the head teacher, and the pupils. Lortie (1975, Cited in Coffey, 2008: 42) comments that this awareness of and this desire for collaboration by teachers suggest a departure from previous generations of teachers who preferred the autonomy and isolation of their classrooms.

Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge (1998: 124) suggest that 'cultures comprise patterns of belief, values, attitudes, expectations, ways of thinking, feeling, moving, using objects and so on'. Cultures, according to structuralists, are like languages that exist as structured systems which are independent of their use by particular individuals. Therefore, in order to speak and be understood within an existing language system of meanings, one needs to learn the native tongue. For new teachers, they need to socialize into the school culture, a process through which the new teachers are internalized as social identities with recognisable roles to play. Individuals are not entirely passive in this process, as Blumer (1969) argues that the human being responds to the outside through the mechanism of the self-interaction and acts towards his world on the basis of the interpretation of what confronts him, and then organizes his behaviour and action. However, Lacey points out that Blumer overlooks one important point which is the power relationships within the organization. He suggests that 'as far as the organization is concerned the situation is usually defined according to the interpretation of the organizationally most powerful person taking a part in the social drama. This person can be and often is influenced in

making his interpretation by the quality of the performance' (Lacey, 1977: 73). Therefore, for new entrants, two types of situational adjustment are usually recognizable, according to Lacey:

- Strategic compliance, in which the individual complies with the authority figure's definition of the situation and the constraints of the situation but retains private reservations about them. He is merely seen to be good;
- Internalized adjustment, in which the individual complies with the constraints and believes that the constraints of the situation are for the best. He really is good (Lacey, 1977: 72).

Lacey suggests that the early years of teaching should not be veteran-oriented to address the inadequacy of teacher training or teacher performance. Duncombe and Armour (2004) and Kardos and Johnson (2008) both highlight the collaborative nature of professional culture. Kardos and Johnson (2008) study on new teachers' experience of school culture reports high and positive correlation between integrated professional culture and new teachers' job satisfaction. They describes integrated professional culture as the ongoing interaction and shared responsibilities between veteran and new teachers that focus on learning and teaching. This type of professional culture is suitable for the effective professional development that Duncombe and Armous (2004: 143) promote which is 'active and practical, ongoing, reflective, collaborative, planned and focused upon the needs of specific teachers and pupils'.

Principals' role in creating a supportive school culture for new teachers is also important according to Lacey's point of view. O'Brien (2004) notes that it is important for principals to engage with and manage the entire process of induction. He also highlights principals' role in assessing, monitoring and evaluating the induction.

Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest that, in communities of practice, members are mutually engaged in collaboration that reinforces shared beliefs and can contribute to

the formation of professional and personal identities, which echoes what Clark and Hollingsworth (2002) and Lovett and Gilmore (2003) have argued that the environment where teachers work play an important part in determining self-efficacy and teacher confidence. .

2.3.2.3. Esteem needs (Breux and Wang, 2003: 63): is there nothing but the four walls and me here? When will I hear a few words of encouragement? What can I do to help so that I feel I have some significance around here? I feel so useless and so alone. Won't someone tell me about the 'unwritten rules' in the school?

Maslow (1970) explains that firmly based self-esteem needs to be based on real capacity, achievement, and respect from others. There are two sets of desires for self-esteem: 1) the desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom; and 2) the desire for reputation or prestige, recognition, attention, importance, or appreciation. He argues that all people have need for firmly based self-esteem and the satisfaction of this need leads to a sense of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world.

Draper and O'Brien (2006), from the perspective of self theorists, argue that self-esteem developed from the previous success is threatened by starting a new post. New teachers need that self-esteem to cope with uncertainty and the new demands and expectations of the new situation while the unexpected pressures make them feel less confident. Bandura (2004: 131) describes self-efficacy, an essential element of meeting the self-esteem need, as "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations". Flores (2004: 133) worries that the reality and difficulties of teaching that new teachers confront may challenge their personal beliefs, their more idealistic attitudes and their self-efficacy toward teaching. As a result, they tend to 'unlearn' the seemingly 'unreal' theories and teaching methods acquired from pre-service training and adopt more traditional and practical strategies. Hardy (1999) also agrees by saying that without proper opportunities for professional development, new teachers, in order to

survive their first year, may narrow the teacher's role to technical instructional strategies.

Kelchtermans (1996: 313) reports beginning teachers' sense of disappointment and powerlessness when their students fail to learn the curriculum. The unsatisfactory learning outcomes of students make the new teachers feel that they could not help the students properly and feel they are failing short themselves. He argues that the confrontation with the limits of their impact and the limits of their professional knowledge and skills lead new teachers to 'disappointment, de-motivation, burnout' and a sense of guilt and personal failure (Hargreaves, 1995; Cited in Kelchtermans, 1996: 314). Goddard's (2001) study proves that teachers with higher level of self-efficacy to make a difference with their student have positive influence on their students' self-efficacy and academic achievement. On the contrary, teachers feel less confident about themselves are more likely to find teaching unrewarding and are less motivated to experiment new ideas and teaching methods or have high hopes for professional development.

Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) also note that teacher's vulnerability is also caused by lack of 'political learning' (755). They argue that the behaviour of organizational members is influenced by their different interests and the members adopt different strategies and tactics to further their interests. A teacher's professional interest includes both technical competences and moral integrity and the desire to be recognised by colleagues, principals, pupils, parents and the society. However, the self-recognition is built up upon other people's perceptions and thus it is vulnerable to contestation. Therefore, the new teachers are in need for micro-political literacy to learn to 'read the micro-political reality and to write themselves into it' (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002: 756).

To sum up, if these first four basic human needs are not met, it is unlikely that the teacher will perform effectively or even stay with a school. Nevertheless, growth does not stop with the gratification of the basic needs being met but move forward

towards specific growth motivations over the basic needs including ‘talents, capacities, creative tendencies, constitutional potentialities’ (Maslow, 1968: 26).

2.3.2.4. The need for self-actualization

Maslow (1968: 55) describes the self-actualization need, the type of need that rests upon prior satisfaction of the physiological, safety, love and esteem needs, to be the desire to actualize what one is potentially, to become everything that one is capable of becoming. However, he also notes that individuals are afraid of personal growth because the journey of finding one’s best side, one’s talents, one’s highest potentialities and creativeness can bring feelings of fear, weakness and inadequacy.

It is well documented in the literature that new teachers are not afraid to know and are actively pursuing professional growth in various ways. Jones (2005: 509) concludes from his study on 10 newly qualified teachers in England that new teachers express the need to achieve technical mastery of teaching, and at the same time, the need to establish positive professional relationships with their colleagues. Gilbert (2005: 36) studies Georgia beginning teachers’ perception on school support and finds that the novice teachers demand the opportunity to observe, to learn from, and to get feedback from other teachers and mentors. Johnson and Donaldson (2004: 232) report that new teachers welcomed different professional development activities including job-embedded learning, school-based professional development or more conventional forms of professional development such as workshops, seminars, and conferences held outside the school.

Based on interviews about teacher’s conceptions of teaching career with eighty-five teachers from five northern California school districts, McLaughlin and Yee (1988) find that these teachers are satisfied with their careers within the classroom and show no desire to greater levels of responsibility and compensation. They suggest that teacher’s subjective notion of career is build upon individually based, internal satisfaction and advancement. Johnson and Donaldson (2004) argue that this finding is arguable for the reason that the teachers interviewed, include a large proportion of veteran teachers and small number of new teachers, are those who choose to remain

in the profession and thus are satisfied with the traditional teaching role. Therefore, they set out to study how new teachers perceive teaching as a career and what may encourage them to stay in teaching if they anticipate short career. The result shows that, among the fifty new Massachusetts teachers, only fifteen of twenty-six first-time teachers and eleven of twenty-four midcareer entrants would consider full-time teaching throughout their career. Rather, many new teachers express the will to develop competence and confidence in classroom at their early stage. However, they also show intention to leave the classroom for positions as educational administrators or instructional specialists, or even leave the teaching fields entirely. The researchers asked the question that how could teachers with different needs and expectations be offered the opportunities for professional growth as they anticipate.

Ideally teachers are internally motivated individuals who are wishing to engage in professional development and to achieve self-actualization. Hutchinson and Whitehouse (1999) identify the preferred virtues of teachers that

The intellectual excellences such as being able to think critically and to reason things out, and the moral virtues – like courage, temperance, justice, liberality, ... truthfulness, ... responsibility, conscientiousness, loyalty, friendship, determination ... and so on (so that) teaching comes to be seen as an ethical activity, the purpose of which is to ensure the successful transformation of the young person him/herself into the virtuous person who will be able to participate with his/her equals in the governance of the community in which they live (Hutchinson and Whitehouse, 1999: 151; Cited in Tickle, 2001: 58).

Tickle notes that teachers possess both virtues and the practice of social participation is similar to Sachs' (2003) notion of teachers as professional activism. Confronted by challenges of professional growth, teachers are actively shaping and reshaping one's self. In Kelchtermann's terms, it is the adjustments to not only subjective educational theory but also to the professional self.

However, Draper and O'Brien (2006: 7) question 'the extent to which this process is under the control of the teacher' may thus be relevant. Sachs (2003: 126) argues that

‘there would be incongruities between the defined identity of teachers as proposed by systems, unions and individual teachers themselves’.

Put aside the tension between what Sachs (2003: 126) calls ‘the entrepreneurial identity’ and ‘the activist identity’, in a more superficial level, it is first necessary to realize that personal growth needs certain mechanism to make it move to the right direction. It is also important to realize the fear, the resistance, and the slow pace of growth, especially for new teachers instead of being merely optimistic that the new teachers will swim rather than sink (Maslow, 1968: 55). Maslow compares this to Taoistic concept of ‘let-be’ and argues that for self-actualizing individuals the concept needs to be redefined as ‘helpful let-be’ – create a helpful outer environment for new teachers to realize their greatest potentials and to continue on their own path towards achieving self-actualization. As Breaux and Wong (2003) suggest that new teachers need to be trained and supported if we want them to be successful and that good teachers may be costly but it is better than losing them, or even worse, risk keeping them as bad teachers which costs more.

2.3.3. What if the needs are not met?

Darling-Hammond, Chung, Frelow (2002) suggest that novice teachers do not receive the same attention as the new entrants of other professions. They note that novices of other professions continue to acquire professional knowledge and skills under the ‘watchful eyes of more knowledgeable and experienced practitioners’. Moreover, the newest and progressive theoretical perspectives brought by the new comers are shared and tested by novice and experienced practitioners together. However, new teachers are not cultivated according to ‘this utopian model’ but left with little support and guidance.

Darling-Hammond and Sclan (1996) argue that when new teachers feel neglected and experience poor working conditions, it may cause premature burnout and weaken their commitments to stay in the profession. Argyle (1989) points out that theoretically failure to meet the needs of employees could increase employee frustration, lower job satisfaction and increased withdrawal from the organization.

It is apparently not just imagination as studies consistently show that dissatisfied workers are more likely to leave their job. Darling-Hammond (1997:8) observes that because very few school districts offer learning support for teachers, 30% of beginning teachers leave the profession within the first few years. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) report that, in 1999-2000, 27% of beginning teachers left their schools in their first year of teaching, with 11% of all teachers leaving the profession. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) notes that the cost of new teacher turnover is not just financial but also influence a school's ability to maintain quality teaching and learning.

Another negative effect, apart from attrition, is the phenomenon of teacher burnout, which is described by Gold (1996) as attrition's elusive Partner. Goddard, O'Brien, and Goddard (2006: 857) describe burnout as 'a chronic state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that arises in personnel from the cumulative demands of their work'. Freudenberger (1973, cited in Gold, 1996: 556) concludes the resources for burnout as: 1) an individual's response to chronic, everyday stress rather than to occasional crises; 2) a mismatch between what workers feel they are getting in return from their work and what they feel they are giving to others; 3) a work-related syndrome that stems from an individual's perception of a significant discrepancy between effort and reward; and 4) a syndrome that emanates from an individual's perceptions of unmet needs and unfulfilled expectations. Burnout is also associated with issues concerning: 1) poor physical health; 2) emotional symptoms, such as depression, which are most consistently linked to burnout; 3) behavioural symptoms that have been most clearly related to burnout through unproductive work behaviours and even turnover; and 4) negative interpersonal relations with students; other teachers, and parents (Gold, 1996: 557)

Many of the studies (Gold, Roth, Wright, Michael and Chen, 1992; Goddard, O'Brien, and Goddard, 2006) indicate that the problems confronted by beginning teachers that may cause burnout were a lack of personal accomplishment and appreciation from others; overwhelming feelings they were unable to cope with the

level of workload and the multitude of pressures encountered each day; and a feel of lack of supportive school climate (Gold, 1996: 558). These factors have resulted in poor levels of performance and turnover. Chapman and Green (1986), based on their study on beginning teacher turnover, suggest that the support given to ensure the quality of professional life of new teachers can have a long-term impact on the career-long development of these teachers. Therefore, they argue that the need for support during this early time is critical (Gold, 1996: 554).

2.4. What Can Be Done to Help New Teachers?

Thus it is clear that the entry of newly qualified teachers into early years of teaching can be described as problematic as beginning to teach involves not only starting a new job but also entering a new way of life. The initial years of teaching is also a critical period for teachers to apply and develop the knowledge and skills they have acquired during initial professional training, and more importantly, to develop positive attitudes toward teaching as a career (Britton et al., 2003).

It is widely accepted that initial teacher training is not adequate in fully addressing the needs of prospective teachers. As Draper and O'Brien (2006) and Tickle (2000) argues that, it is necessary to look at teaching profession from a holistic perspective, that is, a profession that requires a framework of continuous professional development and lifelong learning which incorporates pre-service training, induction, and continuing professional development.

However, as the first part of the literature review shows that, the reality is that new teachers are usually 'thrown in at the deep end' and left to 'sink or swim' (Strong, 2008: ix). The new teachers are usually expected to take on full responsibilities as experienced teachers and are often being assigned to the most difficult classes. Fortunately, the sink-or-swim model has been left behind and replaced by induction developed and implemented to support new teachers. Induction has been metaphorically compared to a bridge as a means of helping with the transition from student teachers to teachers (Tickle, 2000; Strong, 2008). As Breaux and Wang (2003: 63) propose that only if there is a structured induction programme can we

expect new teachers' need to be met and to become a 'self-actualized individual who is secure, comfortable, and able to reflect effectively'.

2.4.1. What is Induction and Why Induction?

The term induction is used to refer to the initial stage of work, or to the system of support that may be provided during that phase (Strong, 2008). In education the concept of induction has been 'hijacked' to refer to beginning years of and support for teachers (Draper and O'Brien, 2006: 1). Wong (2005: 43) defines induction as 'a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers, which then seamlessly guides them into a lifelong learning program.' Breaux and Wang (2003: 14) distinguish induction from orientation by emphasizing that this systematic process of training and support normally starts before the first day of school and continues throughout the first two or three years of teaching rather than just lasts for the first day.

Draper and O'Brien (2006) point out that the benefits of induction can be recognized from human terms, managerial terms, and organizational terms. They argue that effective induction can provide information and support to help new entrants cope with the new work setting and to socialize into the new organizational environment for learning so that they could adjust to change easier. Knowing what is expected from new comers and what support and development opportunities are available will be helpful in developing positive views of self so that the staff will be able to work more efficiently and effectively. As they say, 'good induction is thus enabling' (Draper and O'Brien, 2006: 3).

They also note that a good early experience also makes sense in economic terms as the new staff are more likely to be retained if they are able to adapt to the new context sooner and to work effectively. There is not only clear evidence that induction has positive effect on the retention of new teachers (Smith and Ingersoll, 2004), but also proves that induction influences new teachers attitudes toward professional development and commitment to learning (Tickle, 2000; Strong, 2008).

Tickle (2000: 2) agrees by suggesting that it is necessary to look at new teachers as 'enviable resource of intellectual capability' that also bring strengths and contributions rather than just need help and support. Therefore, induction can be seen as a process of capital investment in the new entrants whom with systematic and sensitive provision for their continuing professional development could 'significantly help to transform education and to meet its unforeseen challenges'.

In a early study on beginning teachers, Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) describes the early years of teaching as 'painful beginnings' that new teachers began their professional lives with overload responsibilities and anxiety and were frustrated by 'reality shock' or 'praxis shock' – the gap between expected and actual working situation. Moreover, Blase (2009) suggests the need of organizational literacy for new teachers to understand the 'micro-politics of teaching' (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002) so that they can learn to deal with the difficulties and challenges stem from 'the undefined, hidden, extremely malevolent authority' (Salzberger-Wittenberg, Henry and Osborne, 1983: 12) - 'the institutional characteristics of schools as bureaucratic organizations'. Salzberger-Wittenberg and associates (1983: 12) point out that 'the most negative view was held by the teacher who thought that members were being secretly watched, and that the rules and controls were all the more threatening because they were not spell out'. Therefore, the remedy is the need for a mechanism to address organizational literacy within for teachers to survive within educational institutions and enhance professional role of teachers to adapt to the changing nature of teaching and to provide new teachers with opportunities to develop and reflect on their personal values in order to cope with the transitional experience (Flores, 2004).

Feiman-Nemser, Carver, Schille, and Yusko (1999) argue that it is apparently important to provide new teachers with help and support, both instructionally and emotionally (Gold, 1994), rather than just leave them 'sink or swim', however, it is equally important to think 'beyond support'. They suggest that induction should play more roles in not only supporting new teachers, but also developing and assessing teaching skills. Britton et al. (2003: 2) support this view by arguing that induction

needs to be more than simply ‘filling in of gaps’, more than one-day orientation at the start of the school year or the practical support through the school year. They propose that there are many other possible goals of induction that go beyond teacher survival and support, for example, ‘assess pupil understanding; craft a lesson; develop a repertoire of instructional practise; gain a deeper knowledge and broader awareness of subject-matter issues; work with parents; and more’ (Britton et al., 2003: 3). Therefore, it is necessary to develop more comprehensive approaches to induction.

2.4.2. Comprehensive Approaches to Induction

Breaux and Wong (2003: 36) suggest that the three components of induction should include :

1. Training: New Teachers are taught and shown effective classroom strategies through a series of workshops, demonstration classrooms, observations, and debriefing sessions;
2. Support: A cadre of mentors, administrators, and staff developers work with new teachers personally, in regularly scheduled sessions, to support and assist the teachers;
3. Retention: Administrators build a learning community where the contributions of all teachers are respected and shared. Effective administrators must retain effective teachers, creating a culture that values teaching and learning.

Britton et al. (2003) take it a step further by proposing the need to look at induction not as functions such as training or retention but as a comprehensive concept that includes the following categories:

- **A process for learning:** Teacher learning occurs during or alongside the day-to-day teaching. Therefore, learning is the central purpose of induction than orientation is. Moreover, the induction is also a process that supports the teachers’ further acquisition of skills and knowledge as well as professional development;
- **A particular period of time:** Induction is the early period of time in teacher’s

career, during which time the novice teachers are familiarized with their job responsibilities, the work settings and professional norms and expectations (Bartell, 2005: 6);

- **A specific phase in teaching:** Induction is a phase within the continuum of a teaching career, during which time teachers make difficult transition from student teachers to full-time teachers. It is a time for new teachers to put what they have learned academically into practice within a structured school setting;
- **A system:** Induction is a system that is characterized by complexity, interconnectedness, variety, co-ordination, responsiveness and dynamism (Britton et al, 2003: 3).

Darling-Hammond (in Bartell, 2005: xii-xiii) argues teachers are expected to serve so many roles such as facilitators, planners and leaders, they are expected to understand their students' individual needs and engage them in effective learning, rather than simply transmitters of knowledge. It requires teachers to be soundly prepared in subject matters and pedagogical content with the realization that teachers will continue to learn and develop their teaching skills from their experience and from their interactions with colleagues and students. Therefore, she supports Britton et al by suggesting that a more complex vision of teachers require a complex vision for induction. .

Tickle (2000: 11) supports the view of seeing induction as a phase in teaching, as a crucial time when the shift from pre-service training to the induction and beyond is achieved. However, he argues that it is necessary to prepare for discontinuities and turbulence between and within each periods of professional education rather than assume that the smooth transition will take place. As he says that, 'we might even acknowledge and learn from the fact that in some aspects of social life in some communities, initiation process – rites of passage – are intended to disrupt, disturb, and radically change the outlooks, commitments, and even identities of initiates' (Tickle, 2000: 11). Sprinthall, Reiman, and Thies-Sprinthall (1996: 667) also agrees and suggests that effective education programmes must be embedded in a school context and should acknowledge the complexities of teacher growth and

development and should be sensitive to the ways teachers feel, think, and make meaning from their experience.

Characteristics of effective induction were given by Britton et al (2003) (see Appendix 5) to illustrate the distinctions between ‘limited’ and ‘comprehensive’ approaches to teacher induction. It should be noted that comprehensive approaches of induction go beyond support or assistance or training. Instead, a variety of co-ordinated support mechanisms are tailored and a multi-level of support providers is involved to constitute induction.

Induction programmes should be able to effectively and thoughtfully induct new teachers into their new roles and responsibilities. The goals of induction programmes should not be limited to help teachers to survive but to succeed and thrive (Bartell, 2005: 6). Draper and O’Brien (2006) also provide a list of characteristics that feature Induction:

- As a period of time where new staff are allowed not to know about the organization;
- As a set of supportive experiences;
- As a route for early feedback and review;
- As a requirement;
- As an entitlement;
- As an obligation on employers;
- As an opportunity for learning;
- As a trial by fire (a time of proving competence or of developing practice which links to fitting a prescribed pattern of practice and developing as an individual teacher);
- As an investment in new staff;
- As an extended process of staff selection;
- As a time when identity may be further shaped;
- As a time when support is offered for development (Draper and O’Brien; 2006: 12);

Among these features, two aspects, induction as a time where support is offered and induction as time of proving competence or of developing practice, are explored in depth.

2.4.2.1. Induction as a time where support is offered

Gold (1996), based on extensive review of literature, identifies two major types of report that are available for novice teachers:

- **Instructional-related support** that includes assisting the novice with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to be successful in the classroom and school. There are four central areas to be considered when giving instructional support:
 1. Does the beginning teacher understand the structure of knowledge and how it is transformed into content knowledge? Are they prepared to go beyond just the knowledge of the facts or concepts of a domain? Do they understand the structure of the subject matter?
 2. Have beginning teachers been trained in process or pedagogical content knowledge that includes the most useful forms of representation of ideas, illustrations, examples, analogies, explanations, and demonstrations? Are they able to represent and formulate the subject matter so that it is comprehensible to their students?
 3. Are beginning teachers prepared to teach a particular subject and specific topics at a given level and to use a variety of instructional materials?
 4. Are beginning teachers thinking reflectively and critically about practice? Do they possess the skill and understanding needed to acquire the continually expanding knowledge base about teaching and the academic content they impart on students? (Gold, 1996: 562).
- **Psychological support** for which the purpose is to build the protégé's sense of self through confidence building, developing feelings of effectiveness,

encouraging positive self-esteem, enhancing self-reliance, and learning to handle stress that is a large part of the transition period. A programme of psychological support include the following areas:

1. Awareness of individual needs;
2. Knowledge of how to meet these needs;
3. Learning specific strategies to change negative thinking and behaviour;
4. A personalized plan for change;
5. Trained support individuals to guide and assist throughout the leaning process
6. Commitment to the process of change (Gold, 1996: 563).

Veenman's (1984, cited in Gold, 1996: 561) findings on teachers' need during their first year of teaching proves Gold's conclusion and he finds that the teachers participated in the study report need for support in 'disciplining students, motivating them, dealing with individual differences of their students, assessing student's work, relating to parents, organizing class work, and obtaining materials and supplies'. The first four aspects are major themes of instructional-related support and the latter three aspects echo Maslow's (1968) need theory that teachers' physiological and safety needs, love and belonging needs, and esteem needs have to be met in order to achieve psychological health and job satisfaction.

Breaux and Wang (2003: 37) suggest that one of the primary focuses of induction should be on instructing teachers in techniques that ensure student success. Feiman-Nemser (2001) also points out the need to address the inadequacy of teachers in management and discipline issues because the new teachers are unclear about curriculum goals and contents or instructional techniques in dealing with problems in specific context. Gold (1996) notes that instructional support is based primarily at 'an informational level' and psychological support is 'a form of therapeutic guidance' (563). Gold (1996: 563) identifies specific elements of support including 'forms of assessing individual psychological needs, setting up a personal plan to assist the new teacher in meeting his or her needs, learning how to overcome stressors and to manage stress, acquiring new coping strategies to handle problems, utilizing

communication skills to enhance personal growth, and attention to burnout prevention techniques' (Gold, 1996: 563).

Moreover, Draper and O'Brien (2006) point out the need for tailored support for individual teachers as there are variations in teachers' needs. Therefore, it is necessary to look into what and when certain forms of support are needed so that the support being offered could match the teachers' current needs.

2.4.2.2. Induction as a time of proving competence or developing practice

In England, the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) serve as gatekeeper for the teaching profession that the establishment of statutory standards highlights the priorities for future development of new teachers. This arrangement parallels, at least in some level, with the standard models adopted by Australia, Portugal, Brazil, China, as well as the US (Yandell and Turvey, 2007: 533). Draper and O'Brien (2006: 13) point out that this kind of induction which is characterized by high direction and low autonomy will require the new teachers to 'fit-in' the context-independent competence statement. The teacher's professional identity, therefore, is shaped by the scale of the professional standards and new teachers need to comply strategically to the authority figure's definition, or hopefully, to internalize in to believing what they are told (Lacey, 1977: 73). Draper and O'Brien (2006: 13) recognize the important for new teachers to 'establish credibility and competence', but they are worried that 'if induction only address what is required to 'fit' in then much will be lost'.

Ball (2003: 216) points out teachers in the UK find their professional values 'challenged or replaced by the terrors of performativity'. He proposes the questions that 'who is it to determines what is to count as a valuable, effective or satisfactory performance and what measures or indicators are considered valid?' Apart from the disagreement on what should be prioritized in the business of teaching, Apple (2001: 188) worries the extent to which the general standards can be applied to specific situations and argues that a competence can be applied only within specific context.

Xu and Connelly (2009: 220) also distinguish the knowledge-for-teachers from teacher's knowledge. The former is the knowledge that is taught to teachers or the knowledge and skills needed for certification. The latter refers to the knowledge teachers acquired through life experience and the ways teachers understand themselves and their professional work. They argue that 'it is what teachers know as persons, more than what they are taught, that is central both to understanding teacher action and to the design of programmes for school reform'.

Nevertheless, within the policy-oriented discourse or what Sachs (2003) terms as managerial discourse, the competences or standards model is still dominating the teaching profession. Within the English context, Tickle (2000) is concerned that the standards focus too much on assessment rather than development which may narrow the meaning of teacher expertise. By comparing the standards-based model of induction in England and Scotland, O'Brien, Christie and Draper (2007: 294-297) reveal the two ends of controversial issues of standards. On one end, the English standards system, based on the technical conception of teaching, places classroom performance, school effectiveness and pupil attainment at the centre of the focus. On the other end, the Scottish standard develops 'a broad, almost utopian' view of teacher's role that focus primarily on theory, reflection, research, dialogue and a critical approach. Even within the Scottish context, there is debate over whether the Scottish standards are a tool for political control or a utopian vision of the ideal teacher that is difficult to realize (Stronach, Cope, Inglis and McNally, 1994; Cited in O'Brien, Christie and Draper, 2007: 294). Cochran-Smith (2004) echoes Tickle's (2000) concerns by arguing that easy equation of what is taught with what is learned may create a narrowing conception of the teachers' role. If the new teachers are unclear about the nature of the school culture, and its embedded expectations, it is difficult for them to balance between the development of their own style and independence and the requirement to fit-in a model of prescriptive teacher behaviour.

2.5. Emerging Themes

Based on the premises that the teacher is the ultimate key to educational change and school improvement (Hargreaves, 1998), Carter and Doyle (1996: 120) suggest that

studies on teachers should shift from a technical view of teachers to a view which sees teachers as a whole person. This section explores the studies and theories that consider ‘teachers’ experiences and the choices they make, and the process of learning to teach’ to be ‘deeply personal matters’ that is closely connected to one’s identity formation’ (Carter and Doyle, 1996: 120) and echoes the narrative turn in studying teachers’ lives and identity (Goodson and Hargreaves, 1996).

2.5.1. Teacher Identity

Maintaining a positive sense of professional identity is important for teacher effectiveness. Kelchtermans (1993), for example, suggests that professional identity is personal interpretation framework for professional conduct which consists of crucial elements, such as self-image, self-esteem, and job-motivation, for teachers to construe and construct the nature of their work and the education system. Wenger (1998) also emphasizes the profound connection between identity and practice in a community of practice and writers such as Day and his colleagues also argue that identity has a significant influence on “teachers’ sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness” which contribute to their long term career commitment and professional performance (Day, Kington, Stobart, and Sammons, 2006: 601).

Day et al. (2006) note that how teachers construe and construct the nature of their work requires knowledge of self in and outside of schools, which suggests that there are interrelationships between personal self and professional identity and that the personal lives of teachers are linked to their professional performances. This is based on the premise that teaching is an intensely personal profession and the effective teacher is ‘a unique human being who has learned to use himself effectively and efficiently to carry out his own and society’s purposes in the education of others’ (Combs, 1965: 9). More importantly, due to the personal nature of learning to teach and becoming a teacher, it is important to raise teachers’ awareness and understanding of Self as it influences teachers’ effectiveness in helping students develop (Tickle, 2001; Tusin, 1999).

The term “Identity” or “Self” is relevant here. Identity sometimes is used as the sociological equivalence of the psychological term Self (Casey, 1995). However, Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004: 124) point out that it remains unclear how exactly the concepts of ‘identity’ and ‘self’ are related. In this thesis, I adopt Rogers and Scott’s (2008: 738) notion that sees self as ‘the meaning maker’ and identity as ‘the meaning made, or in other words, identities as ‘stories’ and Self as ‘storyteller’. They point out that ‘self will subsume identities and will be understood as an evolving yet coherent being, that consciously and unconsciously constructs and is constructed and is reconstructed, in interaction with the cultural contexts, institutions, and people with which the self lives, learns and functions’ (Rogers and Scott, 2008: 738). Because identity is always in the process of making sense, it shifts according to context and relationships, and is therefore varied and multiple (Rogers and Scott, 2008: 736). One’s Self, on the other hand, is more coherent and holds more uniformly across contexts.

Ball (1972) and Nias (1989) propose similar separation between situated identity and substantive self. Situated identity is a (re)presentation of self that constantly change according to specific situations or contexts, whereas substantive self serves as a core presentation of the self that coheres in an organized meaning-making system and balances the extent to which different identities ‘split-up’(Dewey, 1938: 44). The characteristics of Self mentioned above are supported by Blumer (1969) who, from an interactionist point of view, argues that the nature of Self is complex, changing, multi-dimensional and dynamic because it is continuously formed as a result of the on-going interaction between the person and an environment.

This notion of Self and identity implies that teaching is an occupation that strongly involves the teachers as a person for the reason that teachers’ professional identity are closely associated with their biographies and personal experiences. In turn, as Kelchtermans (1993) points out, occupation is also an essential part in making sense of the Self. Therefore, Cooper and Olsen (1996) argue that teachers’ professional thinking and conduct are neither solely determined by their past experiences nor current situations. Rather, they are creating their world while also being shaped by it

(Day and Gu, 2005). Day and Gu (2005) point out that the realization of the personal self and professional identity contributes to a better understanding of how the variations in teachers' work and lives influence variations in teachers' commitment and performance.

Based on the notions above, Kelchermans (1993), adopting a grounded-theory approach, further proves that the Self influences teachers' perceptions and their professional behaviour and he is able to identify six important aspects of teacher's professional identity: self-image (a general self-description of who am I as a teacher?); self-esteem (a personal assessment of one's actual self-image/ideal self-image); job motivation (motives to start, stay or leave the occupation); job satisfaction (teachers' satisfaction with their job situation, especially with their sense of professional competence); task-perception (teachers' perception of the content of the job); and future perspectives (plans for future development).

2.5.2. Professional Identity as Contextual, Relational and Emotional

Contemporary conceptions of identity share four basic assumptions (Rodgers and Scott, 2008: 733):

- Identity is dependent upon and formed within multiple contexts which bring social, cultural, political, and historical forces to bear upon that formation;
- Identity is formed in relationship with others and involves emotions;
- Identity is shifting, unstable and multiple;
- Identity involves the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time.

These assumptions suggest that 'the identity is a process rather than a system of mechanisms and needs' (Casey, 1995: 58), influenced by the wider social context and broader social conditions in which teachers live and work. Gee (2001) proposes four interrelated perspectives on identity (see table 1) which provides a comprehensive view of the contextual forces. He suggests that there are four ways to formulate questions about 'how identity is functioning for a specific person in a

given context’ (109): from the nature perspective (Nature-identity, e.g. a tall person); the institutional perspective (Institutional-identity, e.g. a school teacher); the discourse perspective (Discourse-identity, e.g. someone who is considered by others as a ‘charismatic person’); and the affinity perspective (Affinity-identity).

Process		Power	Source of Power
1. Nature-Identity	Developed from	Forces	In nature
2. Institutional-Identity	Authorized by	Authorities	Within institutions
3. Discourse-Identity	Recognized in	The discourse	Of/with rational individuals
4. Affinity-Identity	Shared in	The practice	Of affinity groups

Table 2.1: Four Ways to View Identity (Gee, 2001: 99)

Gee argues that people can ‘accept, contest, and negotiate’ identities in terms of whether they will be recognised primarily from any of the four perspectives. In this sense, identity is dependent upon the contexts in which we find ourselves: schools, family, political party and so on (Rogers and Scott, 2008). But what is emphasized by Gee is how and by whom a particular identity is to be recognized. Therefore, being a teacher is a matter of being perceived as a teacher by him/herself as well as by others.

This point of being recognized by oneself and by others implies the relational and emotional dimension of identity. Based on the premise that ‘the process of learning to teach, the act of teaching and teachers’ experience and choices are deeply personal matters inexorably linked to their identity and life story’, Carter and Doyle (1996: 120), from a narrative-biographical point of view, argue that becoming a teacher means a) identity transformation, b) adaptation of ideal personal beliefs to institutional realities, and c) establishment of one’s self in classroom activities (139). Schempp et al. (1999) also observe that new teacher’s identity is influenced by three interrelated elements: biography, establishing the self in teaching, and establishing the self in schools. Their findings suggest that the formation of teachers’ professional identities involves interplay between both external and internal forces. The relational dimension of identity, the complex relationships between teachers, students, colleagues, principals, communities, and state would not only arouse emotional aspect of identity, but also form a variety of professional roles and sub-identities as a

result of the conflict and negotiation between ‘a chorus of voices’, such as counsellor of students or expert in the subject (Vloet, 2009: 71).

McNally (2006) emphasizes the importance of early professional learning in the process of identity formation of new teachers and suggests that early professional learning is largely informal and personal with strong emotional and relational dimensions. This explains the disparity between official standards and actual workplace learning as the standards of competences are usually formal and impersonal. The year-long tracking study of new teachers in their induction year in Scotland also reveals that, among all the dimensions the research has identified, the emotional and relational dimensions are much more prevalent in the first few months of induction, the cognitive dimension emerging later in the year (McNally, Blake, Corbin, and Gray, 2008). The multidimensional and changing nature of professional learning is an essential step in understanding identity formation for beginning teachers (McNally, 2006). It should be noted that this study is not conducted to challenge the existing competence-based standards for new teachers but to enhance the standard by building a model of EPL to integrate the standard with non-formal learning and the concept of identity.

Day and his associates (2006) made further effort in taking consideration of the multi-dimensional nature of professional identity and are able to identify three dimensions of teacher identity scenarios based on their extensive longitudinal studies on teachers in England:

- Professional dimension: social and policy expectations of what a good teacher is and the educational ideals of the teacher;
- Situated dimension: specific school context, local conditions, leadership, support and feedback;
- Personal dimension: the life outside school with links to family and social roles;

According to Day et al. (2006: 601), identities are neither ‘intrinsically stable nor intrinsically fragmented’. Rather, the stability of teachers’ personal self and

professional self is affected by the personal, situated, and professional dimensions of the context. One argument would be that the fixed professional identity of teachers can serve bureaucratic purposes by providing an externally prescribed framework. However, overemphasis of this dimension might upset the balance of the three dimensions, with the professional dimension overshadowing the others. Unless the teachers receive support for the personal and situated dimensions of their identity, it may be argued that the capacity of teachers to engage productively in learning and development might be reduced. Another argument is that the situated dimension of identity scenario is largely influenced by authorities (Britzman, 1992). Therefore, the pressure to internalise and socialise into the norms within a particular institution may upset the personal dimension of identity and hence suppress teachers of their voice and sense of creativity.

2.5.3. The Awareness of the Professional Identity

Barrow and Woods (2006) describe socialisation as a species of training relating specifically to the development of certain attitudes, habits, and behaviours that are regarded as acceptable to the culture or society in question. It is ‘a process of example and expectation without any particular attempt to provide understanding of or any reasoning to support such behaviour’ (14-15). Based on student teachers’ narratives of experience, Cooper and Olsen (1996) suggest that teachers’ emotional identities may be suppressed as they are encouraged to take on roles prescribed by the state and the school which involves the suppression of personal voice in favour of an external voice.

Issue of teacher agency and its relationship to social structures seem to be significant for the formation of positive professional identity (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). As Nias (1989: 202-203) points out, since ‘the teacher as a person is held by many within the profession and outside it to be at the centre of not only the classroom but also the educational process’, therefore, ‘it matters to teachers themselves...who and what they are. Their self-image is more important to them as practitioners than is the case in occupations where the person can easily be separated from the craft’. Scholars such as Britzman (1992) and Rogers and Scott (2008) also

assert the need for teachers to develop awareness of their identities and the contests, relationships, and emotions that shape them in order to assume agency, find their voice and take the authority to shape their own professional paths and identities. As Britzman (1992: 24) points out, ‘one must ferret out how multiple interpretations of the meanings of social experience come to position one’s identity as a teacher. This involves scrutiny into how we come to know ourselves when we are trying to become a teacher’.

Sachs (2003: 149) proposes two competing discourses of professionalism: the managerial and democratic professionalism. She explains that ‘democratic professionalism is emerging from the profession itself while managerial professionalism is being reinforced by employing authorities through their policies on teacher professional development with their emphasis on accountability and effectiveness’. Teachers with an entrepreneur identity which is formed by the managerial professionalism tend to be more individualistic, controlled and regulation-minded because their professional identities are influenced more by external policy and standards. Teachers with an activist identity which is formed by democratic professionalism are more critical, reflective, and strategic based on internal standards. Carr and Skinner (2009: 145) also point out that not all professional capacities can be specified to prescriptive techniques, objectives and measurement and therefore it is necessary for teacher educators to encourage teachers, who are used to be told what to do, to cultivate capacities for ‘independent reflection and deliberation’ in order to develop genuine sense of professional responsibility.

2.5.4. The Narrative Constitution of identity

Theorists advocate the importance of developing teachers’ awareness of not only how social, cultural, and political discourses and forces have shaped their ways of thinking and doing (Zembylas, 2002), but also how they can be actively participate and contribute as practitioners (Carr and Skinner, 2008). Cater and Doyle (1996: 120) point out that the technical view of teaching and teacher development has been challenged by a view of the teacher as ‘a source of practice’ which emphasizes personal narrative, life history and empowerment (Goodson, 1994).

In studying the induction year of teaching, McNally (2006) also points out that major themes emerged from research findings should not occlude the personal and individual nature of the narratives. Narratives are a means by which individuals convey meaning to life experiences and translate their self-knowledge into telling which link the notion of identity to the activity of communication. Therefore, this thinking and dialogue about identity is not merely descriptions but also representative and communicative (Elliott, 2005: 127), and the presentation of narratives should include some sense of the unique persons and some notion of developing individuals (McNally, 2006).

Kelchtermans (1993) proposes a narrative-biographical approach that allows study on teachers to gain more insight into the professional identity of teachers. Biographical interviews that focus on the professional development of teachers with reflection on meaningful incidents, phases, and persons allow subjective notions of professional identity to be emerged. Taking into account the complex, multi-dimensional, and dynamic nature of professional identity, combining the biographical interview which includes the aspects of professional identity proposed by Kelchtermans (1993) and the factors that influence teachers' professional identity identified by Day and Gu (2007) can give researcher a better perspective on studying professional identity.

2.6. Summary

This chapter contains four parts. The first part has attempted to give a brief introduction to the Chinese context in relation to the system of teacher pre-service and in-service education and the relevant policies and regulations concerning teacher education and teacher professionalization. This section also gives a short description of the rationale of the new curriculum reform in China which this generation of beginning teachers are required to embrace. It also reviews the induction arrangement in Shanghai as a potential reference for this study.

Hannum and Park (2002) point out that Shanghai in 2002 had the highest provincial per-student expenditures which was roughly ten times greater than the lowest. Also their study on rural education in China reports that in Gansu, a province shares same demographic conditions with Ningxia (where this study locates), 90 percent of teachers were owed around three months worth wages, forcing teachers to spend time on private tutoring to earn incomes which had negative impact on teacher morale. It is therefore important to recognise the unique setting of the case of Shanghai and gives appropriate attention to the cases of other less developed regions such as Yinchuan city in Ningxia.

The second part focuses on the review of studies in Western/English language literature on beginning teachers, teacher's perceptions, and teacher education and development by using Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a template. It starts with a review of theories of change to demonstrate why it is important to study new teacher's lives in a changing context of teaching. By doing so, it attempts to reveal the reality of practice of new teachers in real settings, and therefore, to identify basic needs of teachers to face the challenges they encounter.

This section also attempts to shed light on the similar needs or challenges that new teachers in China might be facing. For example, despite the efforts made by the government to improve the occupational status of teachers, the common problem in teaching profession is still poverty and the main source of frustration is still their relatively low salaries (Lo, 2000). Although teaching profession enjoys high social status in Chinese society, few are willing to join it.

With the devolution of administrative and financial responsibilities to the local government, teachers' salaries and working conditions vary increasingly among geographical regions and between urban and rural areas (Lo, 2000: 242). Despite laws and regulations, teachers in some poorly managed localities have to suffer non-payment of their salaries or a delay in payment. This involves complex issues of responsibility, accountability and management on the government and school

management's part which are subject to critical review and examination (Lo, 2000: 243).

The third part looks at induction programme, as conceptualised in Western English language literature, as a means of intervention which aims at better supporting beginning teachers, improving performance and addressing retention. It starts with the review of what is induction and the comprehensive approaches to induction as a way of demonstrating the perceived effect.

The fourth part focuses on the dynamic concept of teacher identity and its characteristics which will be used as the central theoretical themes. The professionalization of teaching in China took on new meaning during the launch of 'Quality Education' movement and the new curriculum reform. By promoting a new moral and ethical order of teaching, new expectations and responsibilities are giving to the teachers in hope of enhancing their performance and commitment. Furthermore, the traditional roles of teachers portrayed by Confucianism - to propagate moral doctrines, to impart knowledge and to dispel bewilderment - are now only three out of many roles of their work (Lo, 2000: 241).

The changing policy and professional context in China provides an interesting site to explore how new teacher identity develops. The study of narratives enables researchers to understand the multi-dimensional and dynamic nature of teacher identity by interweaving existing theories and concepts with stories and accounts of experience reported by new participants (Cooper and Olson, 1996).

Moreover, with regard to induction programmes provided to new teachers in China, many university-based teacher training programmes were criticized for being outdated and irrelevant to teachers' practice in real settings (Xu, 2009: 64). Xu (2009) also questions that the extent to which the concept of the school-based teacher training in China has been adequately defined and developed and whether it has been properly undertaken. Moreover, she argues that it is time to explore the university's roles in providing teacher training, either solely or in partnerships. She also notes that

the talk of participation of teachers is merely ‘a rhetorical device designed to soften and deflect attention away from the programme’s predominantly hierarchical attitude’.

In any event, the epistemological underpinnings of the new form of teacher retraining are very technical in nature, assuming a straightforward, inevitably even, linear progression in which general theories and principles are considered first, followed by specific subject-based pedagogical training (Xu, 2009: 206).

Adopting a narrative approach and locating teacher identity at the centre could give voice to teachers and ‘direct the inquisitive gaze at teachers’ own experienced worlds, and from there, pose demanding questions to those who seek to change and restructure the teacher’s work from above’ (Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996). And at the same time, it also allows researchers to recognize the social and professional conditions which support or restrain teachers’ identity formation and provide opportunity for critically engaging Western English language literature.

Chapter 3 Methodology, Research Design and Methods

3.1. Overview: an Interpretive Case Study

This chapter focuses on the methodology of the study and it also explains how the design addresses the stated research questions in Chapter 1. Pring (2000: 32) points out that ‘there is a world of difference between the sort of enquiry appropriate for understanding physical reality and the sort of enquiry for understanding the mental life of individual persons’. Given the nature of this study that my aim is to explore new teachers’ induction experiences by developing an understanding of their own perspectives, the choice of interpretive research design seemed most appropriate.

With the premise that the human world is different from the natural, physical world and therefore must be studied differently, this interpretive study seeks to make explicit the uniqueness and distinctiveness of each new teacher’s ‘thinking life’ and his/her own interpretation of the action through personal perspectives (Guba and Lincoln, 1989).

As the study is ‘making effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there’, qualitative case study design is used instead of quantitative/experimental design for the reason that it is in accordance with the goal of the study as it allows the researchers to go into the real-world settings and reveal, without manipulating behaviour and processes, the context characteristics of induction experience of new teachers (Merriam, 1998). This qualitative study comprises features of an instrumental case study identified by Stake (2000). It is instrumental as hopefully the findings of the study will be useful for teacher trainers in other contexts and can be transferable to future induction policy and programmes in Yinchuan.

Case study enables the researcher to explore the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions which are more explanatory in nature and ‘deal with operational links needing to be traced over time, rather than mere frequencies’ (Guba and Lincoln, 1989: 45). It is appropriate for this study because this study attempts to go beyond theory testing and

to understand the multidimensional and changing factors that influence teachers' early professional learning and identity formation so as 'to empathizing as completely as possible with those being studied and appreciating their articulations, feelings, and circumstances as they, themselves, do' (Gubrium and Holstein, 1998: 11). Moreover, this study has the feature of an intrinsic case study, as according to Stake (2000: 437), "research for an intrinsic case study is not undertaken because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because, in all its particularity and ordinariness, this case itself is of interest". Furthermore, this study also displays feature of an instrumental case study because the exploration of beginning teachers' perceptions in their induction year may be useful to others.

3.2. Method of Inquiry: A Narrative Approach

It is argued that new teachers, who have spent years observing teaching as pupils and building emotional relationships with teachers, bring with them a set of presumptions about and awareness of at least some aspect of teacher's work (Hargreaves, 1998; Lacey, 1977). The initial years of teaching thus are a critical period for new teachers to apply and develop the knowledge and skills they have acquired during initial professional training, to overcome reality shock, and more importantly, to develop positive attitudes toward teaching as a career (Britton et al., 2003).

A sense of professional identity provides an useful lens to look at teacher induction because it influences teachers' sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, and job satisfaction which contribute to their long term career commitment and professional performance (McNally, 2006; Day et al., 2006: 601). Kelchtermans (1993) suggests that professional identity is a personal interpretation framework for teachers to construe and construct the nature of their work and the education system, and hence is constructive in nature. I will briefly draw attention to some important dimensions of professional identity of teachers:

- Professional identity of teachers is dependent upon and formed within multiple contexts which bring social, cultural, political, and historical forces to bear upon that formation;

- Professional identity is defined by relationship with others both on an interpersonal level and at a broader social level, and involves emotions;
- Identity is shifting, unstable and multiple, and therefore involves the process of construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time (Rodgers and Scott, 2008: 733).

Narrative is considered to be an ideal medium to explore identity because it is able to represent the temporal self through meaningful portrayal in time and space, from a relational perspective. This is associated with the understanding of language as a constituting force of the social world and identity (Riessman, 2008). The past events and experiences are recounted through teachers' narratives to confer meaning to themselves and others and to make meaning of current experiences in a similar manner as Josselson (1995) describes that we live life forwards but understand it backwards. Teachers can narratively construct images of teaching that construct their notions of professional identity with reference to the language system and discourse within which reality and meaning is constructed (Goodson, 2003). An attention to narratives celebrates subjectivity, human agency and imagination which are the reason why it is suited to studies of identity (Riessman, 1993).

Goodson (1994) argues that most research methods adopted in studies on the members of the teaching profession are rather statistical than personal, the results of which usually come from surveys and can be easily manipulated for institutional convenience. Moreover, many researchers and government policymakers focus on the knowledge base for controlling teaching rather than centre on the persons who actually hold the knowledge which result in simplistic view of the teaching process and the prescriptive nature of the policy. Therefore, studying teachers' lives is also a way to empower the teachers and to assure that the teachers' voice is heard.

Sachs (2003) and Wenger (1998) both emphasize the connection between identity and practice. Sachs (2003: 126) suggests that 'identity and practice mirror each other'. Britzman (1992: 4) also point out that 'there is a distinction between learning to teach and becoming a teacher. Indeed, the significant albeit hidden work of

learning to teach concerns negotiating with conflicting representations and desires. One must ferret out how multiple interpretations of the meanings of social experience come to position one's identity as a teacher. This involves scrutiny into how we come to know ourselves when we are trying to become a teacher'.

The scrutiny of teachers' lives can be achieved by intensive conversations with teachers. Sachs suggests that how teachers construct their self-narratives reflect their own social, political and professional agenda. Hinchman (1997: xvi) define narratives as 'discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people's experiences of it.' This definition indicates that the narratives teachers use to construct their life stories are helpful for the audience to understand how the teachers make sense of their own professional experience and bring meanings to their professional behaviours, in other word, how they form their professional self.

Moreover, Ricoeur suggests that narratives can be used to conceptualize how individuals can be having a continuous presence through time without becoming fixed or essentialized, as a narrative understanding of identity avoids the choice between continual flux and instability and the stasis of absolute identity. He argues that without the recourse to narration, 'the problem of personal identity would in fact be condemned to an antimony with no solution' (Ricoeur, 1988: 246).

Elliot (2005: 131) points out that, in quantitative research, the individuals are obscured, leaving 'no scope for understanding the ways in which individuals use narrative to construct and maintain a sense of their own identity'. Since it is to understand new teachers' lives and the way in which they construct their identity that interests me, I will adopt a narrative approach for this study. Recent studies, such as Kelchtermans' study (1993) of using narrative-biographical approach to study teacher professional development, suggest that the features of the narrative approach enable the research design to be sensitive to the multidimensionality of the early professional learning of new teachers (Goodson, 1994). This is also proved by the EPL project and the VITAE project as qualitative interviews concerning teachers

work and lives are the major method used to collect data (Day and Gu, 2007; McNally, 2006).

However, the term 'narrative' itself is a trick one. Being used for different research purposes, the concept of narrative is given different meanings and scope. As Riessman (2008: 5-6) point out, narrative can refer to 'a discrete unit of discourse' in social linguistics as well as 'an entire life story' in social history and anthropology; It encompasses personal stories of life and therapeutic conversations in sociological and psychological studies as well as a number of written, aural or visual records obtained from narratives' context (Squire, 2008).

I don't know if I am able to give a definition to narrative because the conception of narrative is related to the research questions. In this particular context, I understand narrative as oral accounts of teachers that bring together prior events, perceptions, ideas and actions in temporally and thematically meaningful constructions (S reide, 2007). But one important point is raised by Clandinin and Connelly (2000: 4) that narrative is not only the phenomena under study but also the method of study.

My study aims to look at new teacher induction by hearing the voice of new teachers. By adopting a narrative approach, it requires awareness to the methodological and theoretical commitment which go beyond the view of seeing narrative as simply stories to be analyzed or specific methods and techniques to be employed (Stanley, 2008). From the perspective of narrative approach, teachers' narratives do not simply represent individual experience as what really happened. As Holstein and Gubrium (2000) point out, narrative analysts do not share the assumptions that subjects have 'unmediated accesses' to experience and hold the authenticity of experience. On the contrary, what these teachers say are narratives deployed to make their point of view explainable and understandable, and hence should be analyzed for what the contents tell us and how these are shaped by participating in a culture (Miller and Glassner, 1997).

Stanley (2008) considers narrative enquiry as ‘analytical activities of the researcher in constructing a narrative frame by analyzing stories that are linked together in life, involving the researcher’s interpretational work in perceiving tacit connections across social phenomena’ (436). This definition has two important implications for me to look at my own study. First of all, it emphasizes the openness of narrative approach as a method of enquiry in terms of including a range of narrative materials appropriate in the research context as well as a range of tools that fit into the interpretational framework. Secondly, it emphasizes how stories are not self-evident and can be linked to other stories and larger stories. But this focus on content and meaning of narrative approach suggests that the analysis need to be grounded in actual narratives produced during my interviews with new teachers, and the larger stories, either cultural or social, are not fully evident in advance of the analysis (Chase, 1995: 20).

3.3. Combining Narrative Interviews with Topical Interviews: Developing a Framework for Interviews

3.3.1. Overview

A narrative analysis that involves exploring of the content and the meaning made fits better with a qualitative paradigm. Accordingly, the primary sources of information for my study were semi-structured participant interviews. It is widely acknowledged that one of the strengths of qualitative interviewing is that it provides an opportunity to understand the ways in which individuals construct and construe a sense of their own identity by putting the faces to and giving voice to the obscured individuals (Elliot, 2005). The reformulation of the qualitative interview has far removed from the concerns towards the dissatisfaction with the quantitative paradigm and has focused on the possibility of producing more meaningful data by improving the craftsmanship of the interviewers and positing greater involvement in a more ethical and humanistic interview process.

Interviewing is rather like a marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed door there is a world of secrets (Oakley, 1981: 41).

As Oakley nicely puts, although all qualitative researchers who interview share the assumption that ‘the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit’, however, not only does the quality of interview data depend largely on each interviewer’s capabilities, the form and structure of the interview as well as the nature of data obtained are also shaped by the research agenda and theoretical suppositions of each researcher. The point is that it is the researcher’s responsibility to provide a framework within which participants can ‘respond comfortably, accurately, and honestly’ to different kinds of questions (Patton, 2002: 341).

Patton (2002) suggests that approaches of qualitative interviews distinguish each other in terms of the types of preparation, conceptualization, and instrumentation. Researchers can make use of these different approaches by exploring their strengths and weaknesses to serve different purposes. For my own study, I adopt the term ‘narrative interview’ and ‘topical interview’ used by Scheibelhofer’s (2008) to look at the entry point of each approach into my interview schedule.

As Mishler (1986) points out, during a qualitative interview, what the researchers ask are guided by their initial research agenda and questions, therefore, the interview content is a joint production partially shaped by the researcher’s own theoretical thinking. The narratives, in qualitative interview settings, are produced by question-and-answer exchanges and hence are tied to the context of previous utterances (Riessman, 1993: 3). These arguments have made me reflect on the interviews I have done with the participants. Scheibelhofer (2008) distinguishes two types of qualitative interview, narration-based interviews and topical interviews. The former build upon narrations and story-telling done by the interviewee and therefore possesses minimized structuring on the part of the interviewer. The latter is based on prepared research questions that are derived from theoretical themes. My interview schedule has elements from both types of interviewing and this section aims to explore how these two types of interviewing can be combined together to suit my own research purposes.

3.3.2. The Narrative Interview

Mishler (1986) argues that the discourse of the interview is co-constructive in nature and that many forms of research interview, such as semi-structured interviews, suppress stories by limiting the answers from the interviewee to as short and direct as possible to the questions asked. Drawing from Gee's (2001) notion of story-telling being a common form of daily conversation, Mishler urges researchers to reconsider the interview process and how stories should be treated in the analysis process. Holstein and Gubrium (2000) support this point of view by suggesting that participants should not be treated as 'passive vessels of answers' but as ideologists of their own whose existence are not assumed before or independent from the interview conversation. Hence, the interviewers listen to not only 'what' has happened but also 'how' which implies that the structuring usually takes place during the interview and is up to the interviewee. Interviewers are not passive either in a sense that they should be 'activated' to linking the stories to the sensitizing concepts and the overall project, 'producing a subject who responds to, or is affected by, the matters under consideration' (150).

Therefore, the narrative interviewing is a type of in-depth interview that is similar to what Patton (2002: 343) terms as 'the informal conversational interview' and what Fontana and Frey (2000: 652) term as 'unstructured interview'. This type of interview offers minimized structuring from the interviewers' part and invites the interviewees to tell their stories and to take responsibility for meaning-making of their talk (Chase, 1995).

One of the advantages of narrative interview is that the questions are emerged from talking to a person in a particular setting and, therefore, the questions are framed using the language of the interviewees rather than technical language used by the interviewers. Questions can be personalized and situated to allow deeper commutation with the participants. In this way, it also reinforced the strength of the qualitative interviewing to capture the individual and situational differences (Chase, 1995; Patton, 2002).

More importantly, inviting stories helps not only the researchers but also the participants to understand the nature of their experiences. In the case of my study, if the complexity of constructing professional identity is to be acknowledged, stories provide an opportunity for new teachers to address a sense of agency in times of uncertainty and growth. Hence, the interviews that are open to stories may benefit from the functions of stories (Cortazzi, 1989):

3.3.2.1. Psychological Functions

Atkinson (1998) points out that the stories possess elements of critical incidents that can be seen as a progression, a linear mode that consists of a beginning, various stages and an ending which hold together the order to the story-teller's experience. Labov (1972) argues that narrative serves an evaluative function which is achieved in recounting the personal experiences. By exposing themselves in stories, new teachers construct a reality as a result of their experience and make an argument of how they want their positioned identity as teachers or new teachers to be recognized

Elliott (2002) argues that the process of narrative interviewing is similar to that of a therapy session that it possesses therapeutic potential which consists of 'the (re)formation of a client's self-narratives according to certain normative resources' (Lynch, 1997, cited in Elliott, 2002: 141). This feature of narrative interviewing raises certain ethical concern for the researcher, but at the same time, offers an opportunity for analytical reports from the story-teller rather than simply recapitulation of the past. Hence, stories leave space for learning about and reflecting upon 'the dialectic of conflict and resolution, change and growth', giving the researcher a better understanding of the person in dialogue (Atkinson, 1998: 11). In this way, as Cortazzi (1989) argues, narratives may also help teachers relieve their stress and tension and express their subjective educational theories that inform their teaching (Kelchtermans, 1993).

3.3.2.2. Social Functions

Since narratives always emerge in social contexts, the past, the present, and the hope for the future are cemented by the storyteller into the construction of stories;

therefore, the stories can be seen as the social representation of identities which provide a rich description and interpretation of life experiences.

Tamboukou (2008), from a Foucauldian perspective, argues that narratives serve as technologies of power, 'which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivising of the subject' (Foucault, 1988: 18). And through categorization, distribution and manipulation - the procedures of objectivising of the subject, the individual turns oneself into a subject whose sense of self is being constituted within a discursive regime theorized from one's autobiographical narratives (Tamboukou, 2008: 107). For new teachers, how their stories interwoven around their daily practices may reveal the subtle power relations between themselves, other school members, traditions and habits of an organisation that they live by, and the normative ideas of teaching that shape the individual teacher to the requirements of the teaching profession (Atkinson, 1998; Kelchtermans, 1993). In this way, not only do stories reveal an understanding of the self and the others, they also give a history and social order of the context.

From a narrower sense, stories of career experience help teachers develop their own personal interpretive framework which legitimate and give meaning to their actions. Through telling stories, teachers conceptualize their subjective teaching theories and share them with others in order to demonstrate competence, gain validation and overcome professional isolation (Cortazzi, 1989; Kelchtermans, 1993).

3.3.2.3. Cultural functions

New teachers' narratives derive from family structure, larger professional group, cultural, ideological and historical context in which the shared cultural values exist and the acculturation of new members takes place. Therefore, the telling of individual narratives provides a frame of reference for understanding the larger organizational stories or cultural stories, through which a culturally understood self can be produced (Denzin, 1989).

However, stories and narrative interviews that invite stories also bear certain limits. Denzin (1989: 74) points out that a story is always an interpretive account and interpretation is always biased. He suggests that every story-teller either 'tell a story that accords with the fictional facts about his or her life' or 'tell a story which departs from those facilities'. And he argues that researchers as listeners are in no position to tell the difference between these two narrative forms.

Data gathered from narrative interviews also causes practical difficulties as the data will be different and individualized for each person interviewed, and therefore will be difficult to analyze and link together. Moreover, the narrative interview requires certain qualities from the interviewer that they must be able to 'interact easily with people in a variety of settings, generate rapid insights, formulate questions quickly and smoothly' (Patton, 2002: 345). This approach also works more effectively when the researcher can stay in the setting for a certain period of time instead of collecting data based on a single interview session.

3.3.3. The Topical Interview

The second approach to qualitative interviewing is semi-structured interview with prepared lists of questions called topic or interview guide (Patton, 2002). The topical interview guide provides topics derived from theoretical framework or literature review within which the interviewer is free to change the wording or sequence of the questions. Having an interview guide ensures that the compatibility of data collected as each interview is guided by the same basic logic of inquiry. But it also leaves space for building conversation within the selected particular subject area. This type of interview can be effective to address the same events with different participants to obtain a coherent story. For example, in programme evaluation, a framework can be developed to document the perceptions and attitudes of programme participants, staff, and other stakeholders towards their experiences.

One of the advantages of this approach is that less demand is placed on both interviewer and interviewee's narrative competence as the standardized questions can compensate for skills and techniques which can be beneficial for new researchers

(Patton, 2002: 346). Moreover, the carefully chosen topics can make up for the limited time available in an interview session and in the general research design. Nevertheless, Scheibelhofer's (2008) points out that the topical interview is structured by the researcher's concern and therefore compromise to a certain extent a fundamental goal of qualitative research which is 'to be open to the social world we study without implicitly imposing our own ideas' (406). Another methodological weakness is that it does not allow researcher's to explore topics that are not anticipated when the interview schedule is designed (Patton, 2002).

3.3.4. Combining the Two Approaches

The narrative interviews with minimized structuring are able to collect a substantial amount of new teachers' narratives which might be able to reveal individual experiences and attitudes as well as common perceptions and expressions of the first year of teaching. The topical interviews take advantage of the theoretical themes of professional identity and early professional learning to bring together the theoretical concepts with empirical evidence. For the second stage of the present study, it hopes to combine the two strategies so that within the topics related to the research questions interviewer still has the freedom to probe and explore certain subjects in greater depth or generate new questions that are raised from teachers' narratives that are not originally anticipated.

An combination of strategies include using a narrative beginning by asking everything that has happen in the first year of teaching, followed by two broad topics, the first year of teaching and early professional learning and induction, to frame the overall line of enquiry with narrative interview techniques integrated within each broad topics (for interview schedule for Phase One and Phase Two interviews, see Appendix 6). Scheibelhofer's (2008) suggests that, with a narrative-based opening, the evolving narration will not be stipulated to interviews' exercise of influence. Closing the interview with open questions more directly addressing the induction programme will generate systematic information from a sample of participants. Also the second stage interview schedule will be built on the findings of the first stage interviews and participants will be encouraged to reflect on their

previous answers to the similar questions such as their perceptions of a good teacher. Moreover, as Patton (2002) points out that it is useful to ask the participants the issues they did not mention or left out until the very end of the interview. Scheibelhofer's (2008) points out that the transition from the narrative to the semi-structured element can be tricky and researchers need to bear in mind the sensitive theoretical concept in order to bridge immanent questions to the prepared questions in the interview schedule.

The research design of my study includes two stages of interviews. In the first stage (November and December 2009), I invited new teachers who had just started full-time teaching to talk about their previous schooling and learning experiences, their perceptions of the teaching profession and themselves as teachers using a narrative interview approach. More structured questions were designed to understand their expectations for new teacher induction. In the second stage (May, June and July, 2010), the same participants were interviewed again using the same strategy at the end of the school year to talk about and reflect on their first year of teaching and themselves as teachers. Similar more structured questions about the induction programme were also asked.

3.4. Participants and Data Collection Process

3.4.1. Initial Planning of Participants Selection and Data Collection

Zeichner and Tabachnick (1985: 4) suggest that the attempt to formulate generalizations about the processes of induction requires study on how specific beginning teachers are inducted into particular school contexts. Assuming school contexts to be homogeneous will obscure differences between schools and teachers and hence fail to illuminate 'the subtle processes' of beginning teacher induction.

Therefore, choosing teachers from several schools instead of one school provides richer information about the contextual factors contributing to new teacher learning and development. For the reason that each District Educational Bureau in China is responsible for the development and funding of teacher in-service training, I initially decided to select one school district instead of choosing all three districts in

Yinchuan in order to avoid variations due to funding opportunities for teacher training.

It is convenient to contact new teachers through school principals. However, this method was rejected for ethical considerations. Participants could be easily identified due to the small number of new teachers in each school which may violate their privacy and influence their willingness in expressing true feelings. I therefore decided to make contact with new teachers at Ningxia Teacher Training Centre. New teachers were required to participate in professional development activities at the centre, giving me the opportunity to handout leaflet about my study and to find potential participants.

The ideal criterion for sampling recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is saturation indicating no new information is forthcoming from new sampled units. However, this strategy leaves the sample size open and requires sufficient timelines and resources. Merriam (1998) suggests that it is useful to adopt purposeful sampling to select information-rich cases for study in depth. For practical reasons, purposeful sampling, specifically maximum variation sampling, was employed in the selection of beginning teachers targeted for interviews.

Patton (2002) points out that the problem with small samples is heterogeneity as individual cases are different from each other. The maximum variation sampling is able to make the problem into a strength as ‘any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon’ and ‘what stood out across these diverse cases was the importance of a local, committed cadre of people who made things happen’ (235).

Therefore, only new teachers who were in their first year of teaching and had no previous full-time teaching experience were invited to participate. Because each school district in Yinchuan consists of an urban and a suburban element, the types of schools will also be considered. However, Silverman (2005) suggests that there may

not be cases to fit in very category. In that case, a practical decision would be to ignore school types as the structured induction programmes and the funding system within the same district for both types of schools are the same.

One of the advantages of qualitative sampling design is its flexibility which means the sample could be changed if valuable information emerges (Silverman, 2005). For planning and budget purposes, a minimum expected sample size of 12 teachers may be appropriate considering time and resources constraints, and also the translation work. The limitation of the small sample should be acknowledged, but as Patton (2002: 245) says, ‘the validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size’.

3.4.2. Phase One Data Collection and Some Reflections

Over the course of the Phase One Interviews I conducted 17 semi-structured interviews with new teachers excluding an initial trial of interviews with 6 teachers (for Participants Information, see Appendix 7). By conducting an initial trial, my intention was not to produce preliminary data but to put the research instruments – interview schedules – into practice, familiarise myself with the interview process, testing recording equipments, and making mental notes based on reflections of the interview process to improve self-confidence. In particular, I also asked teachers to comment on my questions and my summary of what they had said during the interviews. As a result, the schedules differed slightly for each teacher.

After the first week of the pilot study, I found that the situation in Yinchuan was different from what I read about in policy documents and journals. These were some of the points that worth mentioning as changes were being made.

3.4.2.1 Recruitment problems

Originally I intended to contact new teachers who were both formally employed and who were holding a special teaching position. However, based on the information

obtained from Local Education Department and local schools, all beginning teachers employed in 2009 are Special Teaching Position holders, volunteer teachers, and substitute teachers (teachers on short-term contract). As the total number of primary and secondary school teachers had exceeded the planned number authorized by the central government, only teachers holding a special teaching position who could receive excellent assessment result will be promoted to formal employment after working as full-time teachers for a period of three years.

Although the basic salary was covered by central government, teachers holding a special teaching position and substitute teachers did not enjoy the same employee benefits (full medical insurance, housing compensation and pension scheme) as the formally employed teachers do. As a result, all the participating teachers in my study were not formally employed teachers. However, it provided me with a good opportunity to look closely at these new groups of teachers who were facing the intensity of teaching and the pressure of getting a job at the same time.

After the school visits, I found that I was able to initiate contact teachers from all type of schools (urban, suburban, and rural) in all school districts of Yinchuan city. And I was informed that all these schools follow the same provincial government budgeting/funding plans. Moreover, although Ningxia Education Department had specific policies and procedures for inducting new teachers into the profession, induction was largely considered as a school responsibility. Ningxia Education Department had issued a policy document concerning new teachers but it mainly contained information relating to the legal conditions of employment and professional responsibilities of teachers. The planning and implementation of induction programmes was not centrally operated or monitored but was largely the responsibility of school principals. As a result, throughout Yinchuan, there was wide variation in the quality of programmes and support for beginning teachers and there was particular need in schools with a large population of boarding students.

Therefore, I decided to include teachers from schools all over Yinchuan city instead of focusing only on one school district so that it may provide me with more institutional factors that influence new teacher development.

Making contact with teachers went much smoother than I expected. Some principals even recommended new teachers to me. Although I collected some information about new teachers from their principals, the interviews were conducted in private and the participating teachers all happily agreed for full-participation. Almost all the teachers expressed their interests in my topic. However, they would like to know what would be the impact of my study. One teacher told me that it was good to have someone listen to her stories, but it would be even better that some of her problems could be solved as a result. It made me realize how important to keep in touch with these teachers who were kind enough to participate in my study.

The eligible participants of this study were those beginning teachers who were in their first-year of teaching with no previous full-time teaching experience disregard the subjects and the grade they are teaching. The initial impression of the pilot study was that there was difference between beginning teachers who taught core subjects (Maths, Chinese, and English), those who taught exam based subjects (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, and Politics), and those who taught non-exam based subjects (P.E., IT, Art, and Music). Difference also existed between teachers who are subject teachers and those who are also class directors.

Moreover, in a new policy document issued by Ningxia Education Department, all senior secondary schools in rural areas would be gradually closed and students will be transferred to city or town schools in order to reducing disparities in education between urban and rural areas. As a result, some of the city schools I visited have a huge population of boarding students from rural areas which have led to many new problems for teachers because they were responsible for their students 24 hours a day and they were facing student of different academic levels and from diverse background in one classroom.

Therefore, for the full-study, I also invited teachers who taught different subject and teachers from urban schools who also worked with students from rural areas.

3.4.2.2. Practical Issues and Interview Skills

During and after each interview, I would ask participating teachers and principals to let me know which part of my study they didn't understand and which question they didn't understand. I also invited teachers and principals to talk about other points that they considered important but I haven't included in my study.

As to the interview questions, all the teachers felt no difficulty in answering the questions, except the questions about their future plans. One teacher, Mr. Chang, said that 'it is difficult enough to know what my plans would be for next year, let alone plans for the next three or five years. They change all the time.'

Although it is difficult to have clear plans for the future, I decided to keep the question about the future plans for the reason that it allows me to explore whether teachers still see themselves in the teaching profession or they are having second thought about their career. But I added a question about their short-term plans, both for work, for professional development, and for personal lives.

Some of the principals suggested that it would be really difficult to go through all the details of teacher induction programmes in one interview. Moreover, the principals usually change schools in every 2 years, for example, a principal of a pilot study school only started 1 month ago. Therefore, these principals were not familiar with school policies yet. As a result, I added questions to learn about what they did in their old schools as well as the vision they set for their new schools.

During one interview, I asked a teacher if there were any teachers of hers who had positive or negative impact on her. She told me that she could not remember all the details. But later when I asked about how she perceived herself as a classroom teacher, she started to talk about how her secondary school Maths teacher tried to

isolate her because she was a party girl and now she was trying not to become a teacher like that.

Moreover, Miss Xie, a participating teacher told me that ‘when you told me about your own story during our interview, I feel like I can talk more about myself because I know you would not judge me. Otherwise, you wouldn’t tell me about yours.’ It made me realize that how you approach to their personal experiences is essential and sometimes direct questions are not the best choice. But I am also concerned about sharing my stories because it seems that I am expecting the same kind of story and I am worried that it might mislead the teachers.

Two principals and two teachers suggested that they would be interested in learning more about how Scottish government and schools select their teacher candidates. Here I quote from Principal Wang, ‘I think we have a huge problem in selecting new teacher candidates. Some of the teachers’ personalities are not suitable for the teaching profession. It would be really helpful if you could introduce how Scottish schools select their teachers.’ Therefore, I am planning to learn more about teacher education and teacher recruitment in Scotland for future communication.

3.4.3. Overview of Data Collection Process

In summary, altogether 23 beginning teachers from 7 schools with different school contexts (6 teachers for pilot interviews and 17 for main interviews, see Appendix 7) were invited to the interviews twice in school year 2009-2010, with Phase One interviews taken place at the beginning of the school year during October and November of 2009 and Phase Two interviews at the end of the school year during May, June and July of 2010 (see Table 3.1). As the theoretical themes show, the factors that influence early professional learning and teacher identity are not fixed, so the two phases of data collection allows the researcher to document the induction over the entire year and capture the changing process by asking the same or similar questions each term.

Case Study	Phase One: Oct-Nov, 2009	Phase Two: May-July, 2010
Pilot (2 Schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Interviews with beginning teachers • Interviews with school principals and local educational authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Interviews with beginning teachers • Interviews with mentoring teachers
Main Study (5 Schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Interviews with beginning teachers • Interviews with school principals and local educational authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Interviews with beginning teachers • Interviews with mentoring teachers

Table 3.1 Data Collection Process

The structure of this case study is featured with extensive use of narratives in order to provide a thick descriptive environment in which new teachers live. To obtain the depth of description, the researcher also conducted multiple interviews with the local education authorities to have a thorough understanding of the policy directives, with school principals and support providers to further understand the school context and the induction programmes.

The semi-structured interview lasted for about 30-45 minutes each and the interviews were recorded using two digital recorders upon permission of the participants. Field notes were also taken by the researcher during the interview to capture the non-verbal communication and, the use and meaning of local terms and phrases.

Since “the quality of the information obtained during an interview is largely dependent on the interviewer” (Patton, 2002: 341), it is important to make the participants feel comfortable, not only with the context but also with the interviewer. By getting to know the participating teachers at the Teacher Training Centre, this informal process in a way established a rapport prior to the actual interview. Participants were not merely the subjects to be studied. The qualitative interviews are naturalistic extensions of conversations which require greater involvement of both researcher and participants to generate more meaningful data. Therefore, the interview becomes ‘a site for the production of data and an opportunity to explore the meaning of the research topic for the participants’ (Elliott, 2005: 22). This strength of

qualitative interview is well suited to studying new teachers as it listens to new teachers' voice.

Given the very small number of new teachers employed in 2009, the deciding factor on choosing participants was the schools which had not reached the authorized manning quotas and had hired new teachers in 2009. The interviews were conducted mostly in available meeting rooms in the schools they work which proved to be convenient and comfortable. .

Before the interview, participants were provided with an information sheet about my study and their questions were answered. Each interview began with gaining consent from the participants to tape the session by assuring to them that I would adhere to the ethical guidelines provided by the British Educational Research Association.

Following the same procedures, 17 principals/vice-principals/mentors (see Appendix 7) who were responsible for teacher training from the schools in which participating teachers worked were interviewed. The interview schedule was designed to learn about principals and mentoring teachers' side of stories. The interviews with 6 officials from local education authorities were also conducted. The participants were chosen for the reason that the sections in which they work were directly involved in teacher induction as mentioned above.

3.5. Data Analytical Approach: a Voice-centred Relational Approach

3.5.1. Overview

In terms of analyzing interview transcripts, there is a diverse selection of analytical approaches available. For example, Riessman (2008) presents three broad approaches with different theoretical perspectives and research agendas. Firstly, the thematic analysis which translates the content of 'what is said' into thematics developed by the research with reference to prior or emerging theory, research questions, or other factors. Secondly, the structural analysis which focuses on details in the literary text in terms of how are the narratives organized, with attention to different aspects such as genre or the form of conversation. Therefore, the emphasis shifts from 'told' to

‘telling’ (77). Thirdly, the dialogic/performance analysis which highlights the construction of narratives, with special attention to the contexts and ‘who, when and why’.

An important point made by Riessman (2008) is that researchers can make use of the advantages of these approaches by combining them together. Mason (2006) also points out that qualitative researchers usually utilize different methods to make sense of research participants’ accounts, even though these methods have dissimilar epistemological underpinnings. This shows a shared understanding among researchers towards the multiple layers of qualitative data and how they can be analyzed and interpreted in many different ways. For example, thematic analysis focuses more on the sense-making of the researcher upon the data while dialogic/performance analysis emphasizes more on the sense-making of both the researcher and the participants.

The point here is how important it is for researchers to have an open mind. Speaking of the openness, I will start the data analysis by using the voice-centred relational approach which is argued to be a method that possesses both structure and openness (Kiegelmann, 2009).

3.5.2. A voice-centred relational method of data analysis (VCR)

Brown, Gilligan and colleagues (Brown and Gilligan, 1992) from Harvard University first developed the voice-centred relational method to explore how girls and women talk about themselves through their relationships. Mauthner and Doucet (1998) point out that this method was developed utilizing various theories from different disciplines and traditions including psychology, psychoanalysis, sociology, literary studies as well as music studies.

This theory is deeply influenced by relational theory which is grounded in feminist research that asserts that the construction of self takes place through shaping and maintaining relationships within the relational context (Brown and Giligan, 1992). Behind the relational theory, as Mauthner and Doucert (1998) point out, is a

relational ontology which conceives the social world as being primarily constituted by social interactions and relations.

This method draws influence from psychoanalytical theory that recognizes human psyche as multi-layered in nature which can be expressed through a multiplicity of voices and resonances (Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg and Bertsch, 2003). It is also inspired by analytical method of contrapuntal reading in literary studies (Said, 1993). This concept of contrapuntality requires readers, who are in the position of power to interpret, to appreciate the, for example in post-colonial studies, the interrelated, overlapping and co-existing history of imperialism and colonised societies. Therefore, instead of reading univocally what is told by dominant powers as common sense, readers need to realize the wholeness of the text that contain many voices that are all art of the same composition but are distinctive in themselves (Said, 1993).

This method has been adopted by many researchers (Brown and Giligan, 1992; Cruz, 2003; Mauthner and Doucert, 1998; Paliadelis and Cruickshank, 2008) who have found that the strength of VCR is that it celebrates the co-constructive nature of narrative interview and analysis; and it transfers the interpretation process from a discrete one to a more explicit and transparent one which in a sense addresses the reliability issue in qualitative study that the research process should be trustworthy (Elliot, 2005). Another important point made by these researchers is that it is able to bring the voices of the story tellers to the attention. But what impressed me most is that, even though these researchers all adopt VCR, different theories and tools were employed to address their own research purposes. For example, in the analysis domestic life, Mauthner and Doucert (1998) brought a sociological focus to the method by emphasizing ‘the interrelated ontological and theoretical issues of interdependence, dependence and independence’ rather than focusing on individualism and autonomy. Cruz (2003) introduced discursive theory into the method to help understand female coaches’ sense of identity.

One of the theoretical themes I adopt to help me understand new teacher induction is the model of early professional learning developed by McNally (2006) which

suggests that the first year of teaching is an emotional journey in a relational context in which a sense of teacher identity develops. Day and Gu's (2007) study suggests that teacher's professional identity is neither intrinsically stable nor intrinsically fragmented; rather it is influenced by personal, professional and situated factors within the broader social and cultural context. These perspectives are consistent with VCR in terms of the focus on narrator's relationships to the people around them and to the broader context.

The VCR method guides the process of analysis by laying out four steps of reading to explore the narrator's inner world. Within each step, researchers shift their focus and try to identify the following:

1. What is the story and who is listening
2. Who is speaking?
3. What stories about relationships?
4. In which frameworks? (Brown and Gilligan, 1992: 21).

Here I randomly chose one transcript as an example of how I analyze and interpret teacher's narrative by using different approaches to narrative analysis and how these different approaches may compliment each other. This interview transcript incorporates elements that are suitable for certain type of analysis such as structural analysis and thematic analysis

3.5.2.1 Reading 1: Reading for the plot and for my responses to the narrative

The first reading involves looking for plots and storylines. The researchers can search for the story told, the key images portrayed, and the key words and phrases repeated. The first reading also encourages the researchers to track their responses to what they have heard during the interview process and to what they have read during the analysis. In this way the analysis does not yield for objectivity, rather, it raises awareness of how the research context might influence the interview conversation and it makes explicitly the relationship between the participants and the researchers as well as the relationship between the interview transcripts and the researchers.

During this reading I adopt two methods, namely the life story method (Riessman, 1993) and the evaluation model (Labov and Walesky, 1967), to help me understand the story of the participant (Mr. Fu). Using the life story method Mr. Fu's story is told in a manner that combines longer summaries of the content of the transcript and direct quotes. The life story is guided by the theoretical themes which shaped the interview schedule and therefore illustrates the general pattern that could be found in other interviews. In this way, this analysis can be categorized as thematic analysis. The evaluation model is consistent with the structural analysis traditions through which narrative plots are organized by six basic elements and are presented as symmetrical and sequential episodes.

A. Step one: the life story method

The following transcript, from Mr. Fu, contains stories about becoming a teacher and developing teacher identities. The narrative is divided into four sections: a) personal background and learning experience; b) teacher education; c) first year teaching; and d) teacher induction and professional development (Please see Appendix 9)

Reader's responses

Riessman (1993) points out that this method gives prominence to the researcher's powerful position to interpret and determine how readers are to understand Fu's experience. The readability of the transcript is improved by cleaning up dysfluencies and break-offs, reorganizing the excerpts from the original text, as well as reproducing summaries with reference to my interpretation and the interview schedule. In this way, the emphasis is on the interpretation of the researcher which to some degree is still ambiguous and the responsibility of searching for other voices are laid on the readers' shoulders.

Telling the story this way highlights my own understanding and interpretation as a listener and a reader. During the writing process, I started to realize that there were pieces missing from the jigsaw puzzle. For example, during Phase One interview, except the information I obtained before the recorded interview about his education

and qualification, I failed to follow up on his experiences when he was in the teacher education programme, graduate school and placement. Apart from that, I also found that how my own experiences influenced my responses during the interview. For example, I went through very similar schooling experiences as Fu had. When he talked about some teachers' oppressive management style, it immediately reminded me of my secondary school class director who was extremely strict. I felt that I was able to understand what he meant, therefore I did not ask for more explanations. When he told me the reasons why he did not want to enrol in a teacher education programme, I also had the similar thought when I was applying for university, and again I did not ask for more explanations. These reflections were useful when I conducted the follow-up interview with Fu at the end of the school year and more personal questions were derived from this initial analysis. I was also able to show him how his story was told and ask for his feedback.

The advantage of this method is that, although the interviews with each participant went differently, each person's story still can be guided by the same story line which allows comparison between different cases. During the process of writing, I found that it was important to relate the content to the wider social or cultural context, because certain terms such as 'special teaching post' only make sense when the context is explained. However, it is impossible to make explicit the research context through this method (Riessman, 1993: 2008).

B. Step two: the evaluation model

After having different pieces knit together, I then started to search for more specific narrative plot using Labov and Waletzky's (1967) evaluation model. This model was developed based on Labov's sociolinguistic work on how narrative structures relate to their social functions. Labov and Walesky define narrative as 'a means of representing or recapitulating past experience by a sequence of ordered sentences that match the temporal sequence of the events which it is inferred, actually occurred' (Cortazzi, 1989: 59). A minimal narrative, according to Labov (1972: 360), is 'a sequence of two clauses which are temporally ordered'.

From this definition, it is clear that the Labovian approach to narrative analysis is event-centred and text-centred as it treats narrative as primarily story text, the function of which is to represent past events in a time sequence (Patterson, 2008). Apart from the descriptive function, the model also serves evaluative function. Labov argues that the evaluation is the most important element because it involves communication of personal emotions and increases the reportability of the narratives (Labov, 1972; Patterson, 2008).

Abstract	How did you come to the decision to choose teacher education?
Orientation	When I was applying for college after university-entrance exams.
Complicating action	On the prospectus of Ningxia University we received in Shandong province, there was no ‘teacher education’; no these two words to describe the history major.
Result	That’s actually why I chose Ningxia university.
Complicating action	After I came here in Ningxia University and I took a look at the programme, it turned out to be a teacher education programme.
Evaluation	I was pretty disappointed at the time.
Result/Evaluation	It was impossible to change majors or universities; it would cost a lot of money.
Evaluation	I like history and I want to do research.

Table 3.2: Story One

Abstract	If there are competition opportunities, the school will encourage young people to compete.
Orientation	Like I have just taken part in a city-wide competition for teaching skills
Complicating action	Our school assigned teachers and students to help me practice. I have only been working for 2 months.
Result	I competed in the competition and I won the first place
Evaluation	I was very happy
Complicating action	After the competition, one of the judges , a university professor, said to me, ‘well done, young man, come to do a PhD if you got the chance.’
Evaluation	Of course I would be willing to continue study or change career; Of course, I will if I have the chance, but one needs to take their time on the journey.
Result	But I can’t let that influence my work

Table 3.3: Story Two

Labov and Waletzky (1967) suggest that an ideal type of a fully formed spoken narrative consists of six elements which could accommodate the clauses. Behind each of these six elements are questions that the narratives address. The following two stories (see table 3.2 & table 3.3) are extracted from the original transcript as illustration:

1. Abstract: what is the story about?

This element summarizes the story that will be told. Patterson (2008) points out that, in an interview situation, when the interviewer asks a question, the question may constitute the abstract element as it encapsulates the speaker's point. As showed in story one, I initiated the story-telling by asking the question about why Fu chose a teacher education programme.

2. Orientation: who, when, where?

This element provides the information about time, place, characters and general settings. Usually this information will be given at the beginning of a narrative, but it is also common that extra information will be given as the story goes. For example, in story one, we know that characters who had a role in deciding which undergraduate programme to go to included not only Fu himself but also his parents. In the second story, an university professor was also involved.

3. Complicating Action: then what happened?

This element includes a series of clauses that are relevant to the event which are organized in a linear time sequence. Patterson (2008: 26) suggests that this allows 'an open-ended series' of chronologically connected events' to be linked together. For example, in both stories, new clauses are added on using the word 'after' which indicates clear time sequence.

4. Evaluation: so what?

This element reveals what has been recounted by the speaker and the way in which the speaker interprets the events through expression of attitudes, emotions or opinions. Therefore, it answers the question of 'so what' because it emphasizes the

points that are conveyed by the speaker. There are three evaluation devices identified by Labov (1972, cited in Patterson, 2008 and Cortazzi, 1989) which have highlighted the status of evaluation:

- 1) **External evaluation** where the narrator stops and steps aside to tell the listener what the point is. For example, in story two, ‘I was very happy’;
- 2) **Internal evaluation** where evaluation is embedded in the narrative texture which can be identified using three groups of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and paralinguistic devices:
 - a) Intensifiers which includes modifiers (adjectives, adverbs); quantifiers (adverbs); expressive phonology; and repetition;
 - b) Comparators which compare what happened to what did not occur, but which might have occurred; for example, in story two, ‘Of course I would be willing to continue study or change career’;
 - c) Explicatives which include causal or qualifying subordinate clauses embedded to explain evaluative actions.
- 3) **Evaluative action** which reveal emotions without the use of speech.

5. Result: what finally happened?

This describes how the Complicating actions are resolved as the result of a successful solution or left unresolved.

6. Coda: return to the present time of telling (Patterson, 2008: 25)

This optional element returns listeners to the present time and usually concludes the story. The coda has no corresponding questions because it finishes the narrative.

Reader’s responses

Criticisms of this method point out that the labovian approach, although includes orientation element which provides information about who, when and where, analyzes narratives in isolation from the rest of the transcript and the wider context (Patterson, 2008; Cortazzi, 1989). Furthermore, this approach leaves no room for the exploration of the constructed nature of personal account obtained in interview

settings. More importantly, the core narratives construct the story which is taken to be a representation of ‘what actually happened’. However, as the personal narrative group (1989, cited in Patterson, 2008: 31) argues, ‘narratives do not reveal the past, neither are they open to proof but through interpretation they do reveal truths about narrators’ experiences and how they want to be understood’.

Nevertheless, this method will be extremely useful, when combined with other methods. The labovian approach understands the personal narrative as primarily a text which represent past events. Therefore, it is helpful for me to identify key events that have happened in the first year of teaching and reveal what the new teachers’ evaluation using their own words. Its appreciation for structure provides opportunities for systematic treatment of large amount of interview data by organizing the narratives as a cycle of symmetrical episodes which are to be linked together, and hence, enabling comparison within each case (Riessman, 2008), for example, the story one and story two told by Mr. Fu happened six years apart from each other. By linking these two stories together, it reveals a possible logic by which Mr. Fu made sense of his decisions and his current situations and how his pre-perceptions of the teaching profession was consistent with his decisions, and how this pre-perceptions were reinforced by working as a teacher which explains why he ‘would be willing to change career’ if he had the chance. This method also allows comparing between different cases to see how different story tellers evaluate same events or similar experiences. And if such narrative perspectives towards one particular events are evident in the narratives of a number of new teachers, as Cortazzi (1989) points out, it may reveal cultural patterns that are common to new teachers.

3.5.2.2. Reading 2: Reading for the voice of the ‘I’

The second reading centres on those areas in the transcript where the interviewee speaks about himself. Here I focus on the speaking ‘I’, ‘Me’, ‘We’, ‘You’, ‘He’ and ‘They’ in talking about himself which entails identifying the subjective positions held by Mr. Fu as he speaks about being a teacher or posits himself in relation to other people or the wider context. Mauthner and Doucet (1998) point out that, by

doing this, it allows the participant to speak for himself before the researcher speaks of him.

Duszak (2002) points out that the use of 'I', 'We' and other pronouns serve the function of identity construction. The word construction refers to the multi-dimensional and constantly changing nature of identity as identity construction is an on-going process which is influenced by time and social relationships. Hence, deconstruction of perspectives within the interview becomes particularly important in terms of the depiction of viewpoint. When does the participant speak to a single outlook (I/We) and when does he incorporates other viewpoints into his (They/You) are interesting questions in exploration of teacher identity in narrative (Kiernan, 2008).

First of all, as showed in the sample of Pronouns Used by Mr. Fu (See Appendix 10), I extracted each 'I' phrase from the original transcript and listed them in a sequence as occurred during the interview. These statements become 'I' poems which are very revealing as these poems follow the logic that runs under these sentences (Brown and Gilligan, 1992). I then started to deconstruct who 'I', 'We' and other pronouns represented as Mr. Fu spoke into different identity groups as well as other people or social context to which he related himself. Tracking these phrases also reveals actions and feelings which signaling changes in how the speaker changes his perceptions with reference to whom he addresses and how he addresses them. The following categorization of identity groups show how Mr. Fu posits himself in relation to different social groups which can be seen as constructing a dialogue of similarities and differences between 'self' and others.

- **Idealised 'self' as a teacher VS. Current 'self' as a teacher:**

The 'I' phrases with verbs such as 'I imagine' or 'I want to be' distinguish the kind of teacher Mr. Fu wanted to be and the kind of teacher he was at the moment of speaking. For example, the idealised teacher who 'sitting on a meadow....talking about everything, we (the teacher and students) communicate as equal partners' encounters the reality that if (teachers and students) 'really becomes equal partners to

the students, ‘after you give them your nose, they want your whole face’ (be insatiably greedy)’.

- **Idealized concept of teaching VS. Working concept of teaching**

‘The idealized concept of teaching’ refers to the kind of teaching Mr. Fu felt that he was expected, either from his colleagues, by himself or by others, to peruse. For example, on one hand, his mentor and other teachers expected him to interact more with his students and adopt a more student-centred approach which he also learnt when he was in the teacher education programme. On the other, Mr. Fu listened to other teachers’ suggestions but he expected himself to figure out what student-centredness meant and how he should apply it to his own classroom.

- **Core subject teachers VS. Minor subject teachers, Second-rated schools VS. Top-rated schools, and New teachers who have a Master’s degree VS. New teacher who don’t**

Mr. Fu constantly compared himself, a minor subject teacher, to other core subject teachers. In the junior secondary school he works in, the core subjects includes Chinese, English, Maths, Physics, Chemistry and politics which are included in the standardized examination for junior secondary school students to progress to senior secondary school. He felt that students paid more attention to core subjects because of the pressure from the exams and in a way he thought the minor subjects should make room for core subjects by, for instance, having less homework.

As a student, Fu was greatly motivated by university-entrance exams and he also worked really hard for graduate school entrance exams. As a teacher, again his qualification was recognized by colleagues as something to ‘consider highly of’. The attention to exams and university qualification can be traced back to the academic achievement discourse which will be talked more in detail in Reading 4.

The groups listed above illustrate how useful the second reading is in terms of paying attention to the multiple role identities individuals have, how individuals experience themselves within the wider social context, as well as how the social location of

individuals influence their sense of agency (Beaudoeuf-Lafontant, 2001). Other groups identified from this reading include Special teaching position holders VS. Formally employed teachers, New teachers VS. Experienced teachers, Formal learning VS. Informal learning, Boys Vs. Girls, and City VS. Rural areas and Shandong (coastal areas) VS. Ningxia (Western Areas).

By deconstructing the meaning of different pronouns and discovering different voices, this reading also achieves the purpose of looking for contrapuntal voices, the voices that are aligned with the self and the ones which are distanced or silent (Brown and Giligan, 1992).

Mauthner and Doucet (1998) argue that what distinguish VCR from other qualitative analytical approach such as Grounded Theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 177, cited in Mauthner and Doucet, 1998: 130) is that, instead of gathering data about ‘what persons do or don’t do in terms of action/interaction, VCR centres on ‘*person per se*’ and process of personal reflection and decision making. But at the same time, VCR also enables the individual ‘I’ to be located to the relational context which allows action and interaction to be captured and appreciated. It is possible to link the individual ‘I’ to the existing theoretical framework in which teacher identity is to be understood. For example, in developing this reading, my participant, Mr. Fu, had to take account of professional and organisational influences, which have sometimes meant that he had not been able to develop his preferred professional identity (Day and Gu, 2007).

3.5.2.3. Reading 3: Reading for relationships

The third reading is built upon the second reading while centres on how narrators speak about relationships with others and the consequences of these relationships. I started by singling out the words and sentences Mr. Fu spoke about his relationships with his parents, former teachers, his students, colleagues as well as his school and wider professional community including local educational authorities. Then I started to look for descriptions of relationships given by the participant to illustrate the way in which he was able to assimilate the reality of teaching, for example, his professional relationship with his students and how it evolved as he shouldered more

responsibilities as assistant class director. These relationships can be organized into categories including professional relationship with students, with colleagues, with mentoring teachers, and parents. Although all these narratives can be traced back to original transcript, this step represents a shift from a listener/reader to a researcher.

I am still trying to figure my way out. I am trying to figure out what questions to ask, how to interact with students.

Like our teaching and research section holds weekly and monthly meetings to talk about lesson preparations and to reflect. Our director of the section takes good care of us. We discuss our lesson plans on the meetings, and then the senior teachers give us suggestions.

For example, the above two quotes show that, central to the metaphor of the learning teacher is the relationships the speaker, a new teacher, built within a relational context. This is consistent with relational psychological theory which argues that ‘the goal of human development is not for the individual to grow out of relationships, but to grow into them (Miller & Stiver, 1997: 22). The relationships between mentoring teachers, colleagues, students and new teachers shape the ways that new teachers learn from experiences, articulate new ideas, and participate in active learning and reflection. This metaphor of the learning teacher and this self-image of the learning teacher are developed within the context of school relationships and hence cannot be isolated from these factors.

Then I moved on to look at the others with which the participant built up relationships as a way of searching for different or silenced voices. Here I draw influence from the membership categorization devices (MCD). Sachs (1992, cited in Holstein and Gubrium, 2000: 91) points out that terms such as mother, child, and family could be viewed as membership categories which provide users with working rules for making connections between them and others. For example, when you hear the term ‘mother’ you would not be surprised to listen to the following sentence that ‘mother is breastfeeding the baby’ because the term ‘mother’ is embedded with culturally and locally recognized configurations of meaning. In this case, when the term ‘mentoring teacher’ is mentioned, certain expectations are formed not only from the participants but also from the researcher himself. Therefore, deconstructing of the

term by asking the speaker what he thinks a mentoring teacher's responsibilities are and also by hearing how the mentoring teachers talk about their work is necessary to understand the localized and culturally embedded meanings of the term. This analysis provides more questions for my follow-up interview with the participants.

3.5.2.4. Reading 4: Place narratives into thematic analysis frameworks

The last reading serves the purpose of making explicit the connections between the evidence developed from other readings and the proposed interpretations (Brown and Giligan, 1992). Through this final analytical step I intend to connect the voices of the speaking 'I' and the developing professional relationships to theoretical context provided by review of literature. Squire, Andrews and Tamboukou (2008: 7) assert that it is important to justify the researcher's own interests and ways of thinking by posing these against/connecting these to the larger questions of social significance, and in my case, the wider theoretical and empirical resources.

Holstein and Gubrium (2000: 108) suggest that 'we need to make sure that when we say 'I', we know that 'I' is connecting with 'They''. Riessman (1993: 5) also supports this viewpoint by suggesting that 'culture speaks itself' through accounts of individuals. Therefore, it is possible to link the 'big stories' of power to the 'small' individual stories without taking these for granted through thematic analysis which is reinforced by theoretical sensitivity developed based on reading and review of relevant literature.

Holstein and Gubrium (2000) suggest that meaning is constructed by individuals through incorporating particular items out of the endless supply of storyable items provided by experience into their personal accounts which, as they note, are not fully formed by their own. Rather local and broader narrative contexts offer conventional or unconscious guidelines for how stories might be told but not dictate each individual story. Therefore, the discursive practice of teachers and the construction of professional identity are not revealed and chained together by technical resources of discourses; rather discourses are seen as constitutive of the social world (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). As Holstein and Gubrium (2000: 108) put it, 'the meaning and

coherence of a story, and of the self it conveys, are drawn from the linkages built between what is available to construct personal accounts, the biographical particulars at hand, and the related work of contextualizing who and what we are'. In this way, Mr. Fu is considered to be active storyteller who plays an actual part in shaping the way in which teacher narratives are constructed in relation to individual biographies, narrative resources, and local and social expectations.

During this final reading, I read through the transcripts to identify common themes through the lens of teachers' professional identity which might reveal how Mr. Fu and other participants perceived the teaching profession and themselves as a teacher. As a result, job motivation, self-image, and subjective educational theory were identified with the help of the central theoretical themes of teacher's professional self (Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe, 1994) and dimensions of early professional learning (McNally, 2006). Each theme was also explored through the result from reading 2 and reading 3 to further examine teachers' narratives in details.

3.5.3 Summary

Mauthner and Doucet (1998) suggest little attention has been given to the issues of voice and authority specifically in the data analysis stage of the research. They argue that researchers need to ask themselves the questions about how do they use and adapt particular methods or combinations of methods within the contexts of specific research projects? How does an individual researcher's processes of data analysis reflect her/his theoretical and epistemological orientations? How are the analysis grounded in respondents' voices and perspectives?

By adopting a voice-centred approach, researchers show a more reflexive attitude towards their methodological considerations to include the participants in generating analysis and interpretation. Through the four readings, the analysis centres on the participant's feeling and perspectives while making explicit the researcher's reactions and theoretical concerns.

3.6. Reliability, Validity and Generalisability,

Becker (1996) points out that the terms of validity, reliability and generalisability that feature the quantitative research methods, originated from the positivist paradigm, are problematic due to the naturalistic nature of qualitative research, and hence, may not be the proper criteria for evaluating qualitative research. Nevertheless, Elliott (2005: 22) suggests that researchers still need to pay attention to 'the stability, trustworthiness, and the scope of their findings.

One issue with narrative approach, pointed out by Elliott is that, narratives are not reports of experiences but senses being made by the narrators through distorting their experiences. However, it is actually an advantage for narrative approach as the focus is put on individuals' subjective interpretations and meanings made of their lives. Therefore, in order to increase validity of this study, it first needs to improve the use of narratives by asking the right questions and empowering the participants to provide more concrete and specific details 'using their own vocabulary and conceptual framework to describe life experiences' (Elliott, 2005: 23). For example, by asking of 'what' and 'why' questions before 'how' questions to validate an interpretation, by being acknowledging to researcher's impact on the participants, by collecting data from multiple sources, and by theorizing the findings with reference to theoretical propositions.

Validity is not simply about craftsmanship of conducting interview, but is embedded in every stage of the enquiry, especially in reflecting and theorizing the findings. The reflective dimension is also an advantage of qualitative research and the flexibility of qualitative design allows repeated interviews or new samples to increase reliability (Kvale, 2007). I agree with Maxwell (2002) in arguing that validity in qualitative research refers primarily to the trustworthiness of accounts and inferences drawn from the data. Therefore, to speak of the validity of my study is to look at the coherence of the nature of enquiry, research method and tools, and analytical approach and the transparency of the data analysis process (Riessman, 1993).

As Maxwell (2002: 49) points out, the accounts of participants' meanings 'are never a matter of direct access but are always constructed by the researchers on the basis of participants' accounts and other evidence'. The analysis of data was largely grounded in the language of my participants and the presentation of findings relied as much as possible using participants' own words in an attempt to increase the interpretive validity termed by Maxwell (2002).

The terms used for the main themes such as job-motivation, self-image and subjective education theory as key elements of teacher's professional identity emerged from the analysis of data were subjected to examination based on review of relevant literature. This process of legitimizing the application of a given concept by locating them in my research context and relevant theories was set to improve what Maxwell (2002) termed as theoretical validity.

As to generalisation, Elliott (2005: 25) points out that it is not a trade-off between 'depth and breadth' and the study would be pointless if the findings are considered un-generalisable. The qualitative case study is able to provide the readers in similar settings with the opportunity to relate to the situation and to evaluate if the information can be transferable.

Narrative approach can be effective to explore participants' beliefs and attitudes and their subjective interpretations. But more importantly, they bring to the narratives the set of norms constitutive of their subjective mind. This is what Taylor (1987, cited in Elliot, 2005) describes as inter-subjective meanings which describe the common property of the social matrix where individuals find themselves and act, the field where social actors perform their habitus.

In this sense, this case study is not generalisable to statistical populations, but it is generalisable to theoretical propositions for the reason that the narrative design will not only capture an insight into new teachers' experiences but also provide a medium for researching the cultural framework within which new teachers making sense of their lives (Elliott, 2005). The multiple facets of the induction process will be

presented as a result. Hence, the validation of the qualitative data collected in this study is dependent on the definition of truth and the nature of representation. Therefore, as Patton (2002) argues that, qualitative study is not to document truth and facts but to provide a perspective on reality.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The design of this study rests upon professional ethical guidelines provided by British Association Research Association. Here I will discuss in detail issues concerning informed consent and privacy and researcher's effects.

3.7.1. Informed consent and Privacy

Elliott (2005) emphasizes the therapeutic nature of narrative interview because narrative is not only descriptive but also constitutive of the self. Therefore, it needs to acknowledge that participants may not be willing to release the stories of their experiences in which they have great personal investment. Moreover, the effects of the study on the self-concept of the participants need to be acknowledged as the reflective nature of narratives may lead to less positive outcomes. Nevertheless, the strength of narrative interview is that it raises participants' awareness of identity and the contexts, relationships, and emotions that shape them, and (re)claim the authority of their own voice' and that 'awareness and voice represent the contested place where the normative demands of the external encounter the internal meaning making and desires of the teacher' (Rogers and Scott, 2008: 738).

However, encouraging participants to be active also raises privacy issues. Given the detailed description of individual's experience, only a few changed details such as names and schools may not be enough to protect the privacy of the participants. Also considering the small number of total new teachers, it is likely that they will be recognized by colleagues. Therefore, apart from the sampling strategies used to protect the participants and their schools, I also discussed the anonymity issue with the participants of the study and let them know that they can withdraw from the study anytime they wanted (See Appendix 8). The initial transcripts and findings of the

study were shared with the participants to gain approval for their stories to be used (Elliott, 2005).

3.7.2. Researcher's effects

As Borland (1991) points out the researcher needs to be cautious in deconstructing and interpreting narratives, because if they are not presented sensitively, it may undermine the 'work done by the interviewee to maintain his or her ontological security' (31). However, as a student pursuing a doctorate degree, I will need to link participants' narrative account to the research questions and the theoretical positions. Williams (1991, cited in Schutte, 2000: 244-245) claims that 'much of what is spoken in so-called objective, un-mediated voices is in fact mired in hidden subjectivities and un-examined claims'. This suggests that, despite the efforts to discover 'the truth', what and how the researcher sees, understands and interprets are influenced by his personal biography and his own experiences and beliefs as he cannot stand outside the world and remain uninvolved (Schutte, 2000).

On the other hand, the researcher's effects cannot be avoid as a result of my interaction with interviewees in the interview process. As pointed out by Bogdan and Biklen (2006: 39), 'researchers can never eliminate all of their own effects on subjects or obtain a perfect correspondence between what they wish to study the natural setting and what they actually study that is a setting with a researcher present'. From the interviewees' point of view, their narration to me possibly differs from that made to someone else because of the uniqueness of my identity and also of my interview and interpersonal skills (Riessman, 1993).

3.8. Summary

This study constructs an interpretive case study adopting a narrative approach to look at Chinese beginning teacher's lives in their first year of teaching in the city of Yinchuan. It was informed by relevant current research from the areas of beginning teacher development and narrative research on teachers. The study adopted data collection technique that combines narrative interview with topical interview. Data analysis approaches such as readings of transcripts, organisation of narratives using

different narrative analysis methods, developing themes which were used to understand the participants' experience were also described in details. Qualitative inquiry discussions of reliability, validity and generalisability were incorporated to help establish the trustworthiness of the research design (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002, Stake, 1995).

Chapter 4 Induction Programme

4.1. Overview

This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected to address the aims of the study through the first overarching research question, which is to understand how beginning teachers, mentoring teachers, principals, and authority staff perceive the induction programme offered.

The analysis of this chapter is organized into mainly two parts. In answering the first sub-questions (namely, what are the assumptions and directives of the induction policy? What is local education department and schools' interpretation of this policy? And how are new teachers' performances assessed?), the first part deals with the directives for and arrangement of induction programmes in the city of Yinchuan, and utilises interviews with beginning teachers, mentoring teachers, principals, and LEA officers. The second part attempts to answer the last sub-question (namely, what are new teachers' expectations and perceptions regarding induction?) by focusing on how beginning teachers reacted to the existing programmes.

Induction programmes in Yinchuan, or broadly speaking, in China, are not implemented with the same level of visibility as in the United States or the United Kingdom where a formalized induction year or unified national/regional induction programme is adopted. However, new teachers in Asian countries like China and Japan are exposed to regular collegial exchanges such as observation and discussion over demonstration lessons (Darling-Hammond, 2003) and even though there is no specific programme named 'induction' in Yinchuan, training of and support for beginning teachers is incorporated within school-based in-service training initiatives. A brief overview of the educational system and induction programme in Yinchuan will be followed by analysis of the characteristics and highlights of the programme.

4.2. Induction Policy Directives and Programme Arrangement

4.2.1 An Overview of the System in Yinchuan

Yinchuan is the capital city of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China. It has an area of 4,467 km² and a total population of 1.65 million. Within China's overall education system, the Education Department of Ningxia, the provincial administrative authority, has jurisdiction over Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education. The city has the largest school system in the province, and the induction programme serves around 410 schools (43 secondary schools) and 16865 teachers (7405 secondary school teachers) (Ningxia Educational Department, 2008).

Yinchuan's educational system is a multi-tiered one and several sections at each level are directly involved in induction. The provincial Educational Department of Ningxia sits at the top of Yinchuan's education bureaucracy and oversees the planning, implementation, management and supervision of teacher professional development within the province. Two of its sections are directly engaged in teacher induction. In line with the central policy designed by the Ministry of Education, the provincial Teacher's Office undertakes the responsibility of making policies and regulations for basic education teacher promotion and in-service teacher training. The provincial Teaching and Research Section offers expertise on subject teaching and instructional skills, facilitates curriculum reform, and enhances the quality of research on teaching and learning (Ningxia Education Department, 2008; Paine, Fang and Wilson, 2003).

The subordinating departments such as Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education and its district/county Bureau of Education all carry on the policy directives designed by the provincial agencies and are responsible for the management of teacher professional development programmes (Ningxia Education Department, 2008).

4.2.2. Context

The efforts of policy makers and teacher educators to establish in-service training programmes began most comprehensively in China during the 1980's. By 1999 this national impetus to improve the quality of teacher education and training had been

reinforced by national curriculum reform. As mentioned in the literature review, dissatisfaction with the teaching profession was evident in China throughout the 1990s and debates mostly centred on two issues. Firstly, the quality of the teaching force as a result of the traditional and stifling nature of initial teacher education, and the poor quality of in-service support for teachers, both financially and professionally; and secondly, inefficient and ineffective teacher policy caused by the disjointed top-to-bottom educational administration system. All recommendations and proposals seemed to lead to one conclusion, which was that a major over-all strategy for the development of teacher education was required.

In 2001, as mentioned in the context of study, the new concept of ‘Teacher Education’ was put forward to replace the previous term ‘Normal Education’ (the term ‘Normal Education’ mainly refers to pre-service teacher education) (Shi and Englert, 2008). In echoing Comrade Jiang Zemin’s (President of P.R. China at the time) proposal of viewing lifelong learning as the inevitable demand of the times, the reform of basic education encouraged teachers to develop new concept of talents, quality, teaching and career, and the ability to keep learning and renewing knowledge structure to improve teaching (Shi and Englert, 2008). Moreover, the In-service Training Guidance issued by Ministry of Education (2001) also highlighted five essential qualities for teachers to develop in the knowledge structure category: up-to-date IT skills, effective human skills and communication skills, problem solving and action research skills, innovative thinking skills and practical skills, and reflective thinking skills and self-develop skills

4.2.3 Induction Policy Directives

The concept of teacher education is now considered comprehensive, from pre-service teacher education to retirement, with aim of promoting the professionalization of the teaching profession and the construction of a unified teacher education and training system (MoE, 2001). According to the In-service Training Guidance (MoE, 2001), this unified teacher education and training system is to be developed using length of service and age to identify the developmental needs of teachers and by addressing the

emotional and behavioural characteristics of teachers at each developmental stage (see Table 4.1).

Stages of Teacher Development	Focus of each Stage
● Preparation Stage	Mainly refers to teachers in pre-service education. The objective is to obtain the teaching qualification;
● Induction Stage	Mainly refers to teachers in their first five years of teaching. The objective is to familiarize with textbooks and other teaching materials;
● Developmental Stage	Teachers at this stage will be reflecting on their own experiences and creating their unique teaching style that make them standout;
● Innovative Stage	Innovative teachers are efficient and effective in drawing on what they know to deal with different situations. They will be trying to be more flexible in meeting the different needs of students;

Table 4.1: Stage of Teacher Development (MoE, 2001: 12)

Based on the guidance given by Ministry of Education, Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education (2010) issued the *2010-2014 Yinchuan Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training Plan*. The plan states the training objectives for first year teachers to be: be familiar with relevant educational law and regulations; adapt to the real working situations using pedagogical and educational psychology theories; comprehend the common practice and routines of teaching in one's subject area; comprehend the textbooks and teaching materials; develop and improve professional qualities and enhance one's faith and determination in devoting oneself to the teaching career.

'You have to learn to walk before you can run', said Mr. Zhu, a LEA officer interviewed. He agreed that teachers in different developmental stages should be treated differently and argued that school management should be empathetic for first year teachers. 'Usually the new teachers I know are very humble and keen to learn. These kids just come out of school and we should allow them to make mistakes and

learn from these mistakes,’ Mr. Zhu continued, ‘when I first started teaching, I borrowed my mentor’s teaching plan from last year and basically copied everything. I even imitated the way he talked and walked because I was just so nervous to think on my own.’

Mr. Jing, another LEA officer interviewed also told me about his own experience as a first year teacher:

I came from a small village in the south and I had a very strong accent growing up. When I first came to the town school to become a teacher, I could not speak *Putonghua* (standard Mandarin Chinese) at all. Even though *Putonghua* was not compulsory for teachers at that time, I was still embarrassed to talk or communicate with other teachers because they all spoke very fluent *Putonghua*. But my mentor and other experienced teachers did not laugh at my accent. They sometimes invited to dinner at their houses and casually corrected my pronunciation when we were chatting. Soon after half a year, even though I still had some pronunciation issues, I was comfortable with talking to others.

Mr. Zhu and Mr. Jing both described induction for new teachers as a ‘nurturing period’ during which time novices can feel safe and protected to learn from senior and experienced teachers. Mr. Jing also used the phrase ‘step by step’ to interpret the induction policy directives and said, ‘that’s why for first year teachers, the policy directives aim to lead them through all the teaching routines and procedures. They can think outside the box, but they need to know very well what is in the box first.’

Berliner (2001: 21) suggested that “Only minimal skill should really be expected (from novice teachers)’ and this reflects the points the above two LEA officers in Yinchuan make. As mentioned in the literature review, based on the insights into the behaviour differences between experts and novices in various fields, Berliner (2001) also reports on a general theory about the development of expertise. He proposes that there are novice teachers journey through five stages to become expert teachers (see Table 4.2).

In Berliner’s opinion, student teachers and first year teachers may be categorized as novices and may become advanced beginner as they move into second or third year of teaching. Competence can be achieved if advanced beginners gain more

experience and are motivated to learn. Berliner claims to have witnessed many experienced teachers in their third or fourth year reach this level (Berliner, 2001).

Stages of Teacher Development	Characteristics
Stage One: Novice	Novice individuals tend to identify elements of the tasks that they have been told to complete and to conform to the set of context-free rules and procedures. Therefore, they usually display relatively inflexible, but rational behaviour.
Stage Two: Advanced Beginner	At this stage, individuals are able to build up episodic knowledge and recognise similarities across contexts based on labelling and describing situations and following rules rather than actively determining through personal action.
Stage Three: Competent	Competent individuals are relatively more in control of their decisions and the situations. Hence they are more emotional towards success and failure of their decision and actions.
Stage Four: Proficient	Proficient individuals possess intuitive sense of the what the consequences of their decisions and actions are, and are able to develop a holistic view of the situation encountered based on previous experiences.
Stage Five: Expert	They are able to perform with fluidity and improvise with confidence since they are able to make non-analytic and non-deliberative responses using their tacit practical knowledge.

Table 4.2: Stages of Teacher Development (Berliner, 2001: 21-24)

He admits the lack of scientific research in this area, however, he suggests that a general principle can be extracted from this which is that very important qualitative differences exist in the ways novices, experts, and individuals at other stages in between view, think and perform.

One criticism of these studies, as Pressley and associates point out, is that the study conducted by Berliner (2001) focused solely on teacher thinking and behaviour in an artificial teaching situation created by the researcher. But real expertise in teaching is not judged by teacher thinking, but by actual teaching (Pressley, Allington, Wharton-

McDonald, Black, & Morrow, 2001). Another criticism coming from Tickle (2001) emphasizes that it would be wrong to assume smooth and automatic transition and progression from one stage to another. Analysis of interview data in Chapter 5, 6 and 7 also suggests that important qualitative differences exist not only between novices and experts as revealed by Berliner, but also between novice individuals. Whether the induction programme in Yinchuan can provide tailor-made support to meet individual needs and avoid falling into rigid categories to become one-size for all will be discussed in the second part of this chapter.

Recognizing that novice teachers are not the finished product and that they still need growth does not mean allowing them sink or swim by themselves. Hence, as O'Brien and Draper (2006) argue (as mentioned in literature review), an induction programme should go beyond instructional, emotional, and psychological support. Development and assessment of teaching skills should also be included as important elements of induction (Strong, 2008). The next section talks about the organizing principle and key elements of the induction programme emphasized by policy documents and LEA officers.

4.2.4 Induction Programme Emphases and Implementation

The policy roughly identifies allocation of responsibilities in designing and implementing induction programme for new teachers. The *2010-2014 Yinchuan Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training Plan* (Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education, 2010) states that new teacher induction should mainly be school-designed and school-based, integrated with short-term or one-off training opportunities provided by the LEA at provincial and municipal level. The policy also specifies two required arrangements for new teachers. First, the induction programme should focus primarily on classroom teaching and classroom management. Second, all new teachers are required to work with a mentoring teacher. However, details of how these arrangements should be implemented and how many hours should be allocated are unspecified.

It is difficult to decide whether to use the singular form (induction programme) or the plural form (induction programmes) here since although the policy of teacher induction in Yinchuan is developed based on the national policy directives which aims to support the same core goals, but each school is responsible for developing induction programmes that best meet its own needs. It is fair to say that induction in Yinchuan is more than just a vague policy description and it involves a varied process at two different levels. The next two sections utilise interview data with LEA officers, school principles and mentoring teachers to better understand the policy directives developed by LEA officers and how these programme emphases were interpreted at the school level.

4.2.4.1 Interviews with LEA Officers

The *2010-2014 Yinchuan Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training Plan* (Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education, 2010) mission states that the content of new teacher induction should focus on the following issues: professional law and ethics, new curriculum reform, new views of students, new views of teaching, new views of teaching methods, new curriculum standard, teacher's basic qualities, and class director responsibilities. The Plan also emphasises the new demands for new teachers brought by the curriculum reform and the renewal of teaching materials. However, no comprehensive, explicit and specific policy statement of induction training can be found to explain how these objectives can be achieved. Nevertheless, its key elements can be identified from analysis of district and school documents and analysis of interview with LEA officers.

Compulsory Units (60 Credits)	Optional Units (At least choose 4 units from the options below)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regulation of Professional Ethics (10 Credits) ● Educational Law and Regulations (10 Credits) ● New Curriculum Reform – Theory and Practice (10 Credits) ● New Curriculum Teaching Methods (10 Credits) ● Computer and Modern E-Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding the Standards of Subject Teaching (10 Credits) ● Change the Way We See Teaching, Teaching Methods, and Students (10 Credits) ● Moral and Ethical Education for Minors (10 Credits) ● Case Studies and Teaching Plan Design (10 Credits)

Technologies (10 Credits) ● Class Director – Theory and Practice (10 Credits)	● Mental Health for Teachers (10 Credits) ● Flexible Contents (10 Credits)
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Table 4.3: Content of Induction Programme Curricula (Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education, 2010)

At the provincial and municipal level, the policy regulates that, for the first five years of teaching, new teachers are required to participate in no less than 240 hours of training and development sessions. The essential curriculum content (see Table 4.3) includes compulsory and optional courses and passing the exams of these courses is essential for new teachers to obtain Certificate of Continual Education which is a key element in qualifying for promotion. Publications and reading materials concerning the relevant topics are handed out to new teachers by schools when they first start teaching. Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education along with its sub-units also organizes expert lectures, observation sessions and workshops on specific topics.

Responsibility for financing the new teacher induction programme, states the *2010-2014 Yinchuan Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training Plan* (Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education, 2010), falls on local education department, individual schools, and new teachers. The Municipal Bureau of Finance set aside 200m RMB for teacher training and development which includes the cost for new teacher induction programme. Each school is required to reserve certain amount of fund for school-based professional development sessions. New teachers are also encouraged to make contributions. However, the budgeting process and spending details are not made explicit by LEA or schools.

When asked how these policy directives and programme curriculum are to be understood, the LEA officers interviewed outlined three major areas that they intended to address:

- Education law and regulations and professional ethics (chiefly understood as learning about relevant regulations considering education law, employment laws and minor protection laws, appropriate professional behaviour and ethics);

- Education and pedagogical theory (learning about relevant educational and pedagogical theories behind the new curriculum standard and teaching materials that are in accordance with the student-centred approach the new curriculum reform promotes);
- Practical teaching and instructional skills (development of lesson plans and instructional skills that meets students' needs based on the mastering of teaching guidelines);

For all LEA officers interviewed, professional regulations and ethics were one of the most important parts of teacher induction. '*Xue gao wei shi, dao gao wei fan*' (possessing good knowledge makes one a master, having high ethical standard makes one a model), argued Mrs. Heng, former director of Teacher's Office at the Provincial Education Department and current Provincial Education Inspector, and she suggested that at this early career stage new teachers needed to appreciate how much impact they might have on students. She considered *Wei ren shi biao* (teachers should set good examples) and *Zhong shen xue xi* (lifelong learning) to be the two most important elements. As shown in Table 3, the Content of the Induction Programme Curricula (Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education, 2010) included Regulation of Professional Ethics as one of the compulsory units.

Last year we hosted a series of report tour publicizing a model teacher from a small county in Ningxia. His story was touching. He held fast to his teaching position even with declining health and he devoted his whole life to his students. When he passed away, all the valuable belongings he left were just a very old TV and fridge. The report tour reached every county in Ningxia. Lots of teachers who attended the session were deeply moved (Mr. Jing, LEA officer).

However, one LEA officer raised concerns over how the image of the teaching force was projected by these activities:

To be honest, I actually feel quiet bitter. The story of that teacher is very touching but why all the good teachers only get recognised and praised when they passed away? Should not these great teachers be rewarded for their devotion and excellent teaching? Also I think it is necessary to promote health living concepts to new teachers (Mrs. Heng, LEA officer).

Mr. Zhu, immediate past deputy director of the Teaching and Research Office of the Provincial Education Department, emphasized that these areas of importance were to be understood based on a developmental construct of teaching and were developed within a larger continuum of teacher development plans which echo the guidelines given by the Ministry of Education. He explained further that, for new teachers, the focal points were different from those for experienced teachers and backbone teachers and, at the provincial and municipal level, support in building and renewing theoretical knowledge is at the centre of attention.

What we do at the education department here is to make sure that the policy directives are implemented with some level of visibility. For example, the Certificate of Continual Education was developed in order to make visible the notion of lifelong learning promoted by the Ministry of Education. Teachers who participate in training sessions and pass the exams will earn credits which lead to the award of the certificate. We also incorporated this certificate into the over-all teacher assessment system (Mrs. Jiang, LEA officer).

We organize short-term workshop on teaching theories or teaching methods all through the year. The aims of these sessions are to equip new teachers with theoretical knowledge that supports what the curriculum reform pursues...the workshops are open to all new teachers but the space is limited. So maybe only one or two new teachers from each school can be selected to come to the events. The new teachers attended the sessions are required to give presentations to other colleagues in their schools. We also work with the Teaching Training Centre at Ningxia University and hire experts to give lectures or workshops (Mr. Zhu, LEA officer).

As for classroom teaching and instructional skills, Mr. Zhu suggested that these were at the centre of the professionalization of the teaching profession which was also a key part of the new curriculum reform. Mr. Jing explained,

Exam-oriented approaches to schooling are to be replaced by a student-centred approach that emphasizes developing student learning and problem-solving abilities rather than memorizing for tests. Correspondingly, the old competence-based approaches to teacher performance should be replaced at the same time by a more comprehensive performance management and quality assurance system.

Mr. Jing and Mr. Zhu both pointed out that, since this ‘comprehensive performance management and quality assurance system’ was still lacking, what they did at the LEA level was largely the continuation of traditions.

We (Teaching and Research Office) have a long tradition of working closely with schools and teachers in promoting quality classroom teaching. One of our main responsibilities is to recognise and publicize good teaching and develop these teachers to be our helpers (Mr. Zhu).

In our section (Teaching and Research Office), all staff are considered experts in their own subject-area and we all have monthly observation tasks to go into classrooms and give feedback to teachers. For new teachers, we are not only involved in casual observations but also in the assessment process (Mr. Zhu).

However, Mr. Zhu still expressed his concerns over the relationships between his office and teachers:

Because we are so heavily involved in the assessment process, so most of the time when we drop in the classrooms for observation sessions, teachers put on a well-rehearsed show for us. They maybe ‘perform’ a perfect lesson based on the curriculum standard or successful case studies. But these are not what they do when we are not there.

4.2.4.2 Interviews with School Principals and Mentoring Teachers

The major providers of induction activities are the LEAs and schools. However, schools take their own initiatives in designing and providing induction programmes as there currently is no specific municipal or provincial policy being created on top of the long-standing school practice. Apart from the school-based activities, schools can hire other training providers (e. g., professional associations, experts or consultants from Ministry of Education) which give a less formal or opportunistic service. However, the costs of doing so need to be borne by individual schools.

How participating school principals and mentoring teachers understood the policy directives were slightly different from LEA officers. The analysis shows they also identified three major areas that they considered to be most important content of teacher induction:

- Education law and regulations and professional ethics (mostly centred on appropriate professional values, behaviour and ethics);
- Subject knowledge (reviewing and relearning relevant subject knowledge, learning about curriculum standard and requirement concerning the specific subject, recognizing key knowledge points, making difficult points easy to understood for students);
- Practical teaching and instructional skills (step by step instruction on how to develop lesson plans; observing mentoring teachers to learn instructional skills that meets students' needs; classroom and student management);

As with LEA officers, all the school principals and mentoring teachers interviewed put professional ethics on the top of the list. Principal Yang was explicit in emphasizing the importance of professional ethics:

I think some personal qualities, like love and respect for children or caring nature, are an important part of professional ethics that need to be developed. At the moment our employment system does not have psychological or mental assessment in deciding whether a person is suitable for the teaching profession. I have worked in schools for over 30 years and I have encountered many teachers who actually were not a perfect match with this profession. But I do believe that people learn and develop and that's why professional ethics are so important.

All the schools I visited had an award for model teachers with exemplary professional ethics. Principal Wu said this award could greatly boost teachers' morale, especially for new teachers. But new teachers, however, held different opinions in terms of how the award-bearer should be selected.

I don't think it is such a good idea to give only one teacher an award. It is like saying that the rest of us do not possess high ethical standard. The teacher who wins this title certainly feels great, but the rest of us not so much (Teacher Ma).

All teachers work really hard as far as I know. We all get up early in the morning and stay up late to prepare for lessons and grade homework. But who wins the award is, in my opinion, depends on who the school management likes better. I don't really know how the person is selected (Teacher Liu).

Mastering subject knowledge was mentioned by all principals and mentoring teachers interviewed. ‘From a practical perspective,’ said Principal Qi, ‘even though new teachers all have university degree in the relevant subject, it does not mean they have mastered all the basics.’

Mentoring teacher Wang told me that some of the new teachers with master’s degree in maths she worked with could not solve some of the maths problems for junior secondary school students. ‘But it does not mean that these teachers are not qualified, good teachers, just that these teachers need to ‘*chi tou*’ (have a thorough grasp of) every inch of the textbooks and that there are always something new or difficult to learn’, she continued.

Vice Principal and Mentoring teacher Wang pointed out that sometimes new teachers could not explain some knowledge point as clearly and vividly as experienced teachers because they had not mastered the knowledge point themselves.

For example, I teach physics. As a natural science subject, all knowledge points are interconnected. One problem can be solved in many different ways. Sometimes new teachers just have not had the ability in using the knowledge flexibly (Mentoring teacher Huang).

Principal Ding, from a different perspective, said sometimes he felt that new teachers were ‘over-educated’:

Sometimes these young teachers forget that their students are only teenagers. Some knowledge points may seem to be fairly straight forward for teachers with college degree to understand, but they are very obscure for students. One goal of focusing on subject knowledge is to keep reminding these young teachers what it feels like to be a student and that they should keep instructions simple and clear (Principal Ding).

I will give you an example. When we teach Newton’s Third Law, some new teachers just feel it is too simple to spend more time on it. So at most they may only give an example of tug-of-war to explain the mutual actions of two bodies. But actually, it would be more interesting to do the experiment in the classroom. For example, let two students do the tug-of-war first, and then do it again, but this time both wear skaters. Simply change the prop can encourage students to think differently (Vice principal/Mentoring teacher Wang).

In exploring the induction system in Shanghai, Paine, Fang and Wilson (2003) found that a municipality-wide curriculum was central to the work of teacher and schools. Since Yinchuan does not have the same educational authority to develop its own municipality-wide curriculum, it adopts the national-wide standard curriculum. As Paine, Fang and Wilson (2003: 36-37) comments, the exam-oriented traditions give standardized curriculum objectives and materials tremendous importance, which results in a tight connection between the curriculum, exam knowledge points, and actual school practices.

It is similar in the case of schools in Yinchuan. The clash between the over-all development concept and student-centred approach on paper and the still existing exam culture in practice perhaps explains why school principals and mentoring teachers may consider specific subject knowledge to be of great importance.

Actually the current practice is quite confusing for us experienced teachers too. We have attended numerous workshops and seminars regarding student-centred approaches and changes brought by the curriculum reform. But the exam system does not change at all. Exam score and progression rate are still the key things that count when a school viewed prospective students and parents and when evaluated by the government (Mentoring teacher Fang).

There is a change in the way teachers teach as they move into higher grades. In the lower grades, teachers can still experiment with the new teaching methods and organize fun activities to promote student learning and cultivate problem-solving abilities, etc. But usually things change when students progress into the final year because now the exams are the most important things. It is the same for junior secondary and senior secondary schools (Vice Principal Wang).

My experience with new teachers tells me that some new teachers feel the pressure of exams when they teach the higher grades. So after a circle of three years, some of them feel that time is quite limited and they need to take good use of every minute of these three years. Some of them start to think that it is probably a good idea to start the exam-base teaching starting from the first grade. As a result, some new teachers actually give up the new teaching methods and go back to the more effective exam-mode when they are relatively experienced (Mentoring teacher Zheng).

The content of the New Teacher Professional Development Plan (see Table 4.4) developed by one of the schools I visited was in accordance with the objectives stated by the *2010-2014 Yinchuan Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training Plan* (Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education, 2010) which suggested that the focus of new teacher development should primarily be on classroom routines. Apart from the all-important mentorship arrangement, major support and assessment was designed around classroom teaching and, as the principal of school A commented, ‘we aim to incorporate formative assessment into weekly observation sessions and meetings. By doing so, new teachers could learn that they need to treat everyday teaching serious, but at the same time, they are not under great pressure of one-shot performance at the end of semester because their performance will be judged based on the whole year’s feedback from observing teachers and experts’.

2010 New Teacher Professional Development Plan	
Administration Procedures	Classroom Support and Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building personal files for new teachers; creating school website username; ● Teaching routine management: lesson plan, reflection journal, observation notes, research and teaching section weekly meeting notes; ● Monthly check up on teacher lesson plans and student homework grading; ● Student and parent survey; parent-teacher conference notes; ● Training on classroom director work procedures; ● Documentation of lesson plan and other relevant files for the purpose of assessment at the end of each semester by the leader of each teaching and research section; ● Monthly new teacher self-reflection report and presentation; ● Weekly Teaching and Research Section learning session on professional ethics and moral education; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assigning at least one mentoring teacher to new teachers for a period of three years; ● Classroom observations (new teachers are required to observe at least 2 lessons a week; mentoring teachers are required to observe new teachers at least once a week. ● Weekly observation feedback and discussion session; ● Monthly ‘<i>Hui bao ke</i>’ (new teacher show case); ● Monthly demonstration lessons from expert teachers; ● Peer support and buddy system: new teachers make buddies with new teachers from other schools; ● Help from mentoring teachers and expert teachers on classroom management; ● Help from mentoring teachers and expert teachers on how to treat academically-gifted students and students with special needs;

Table 4.4: School A New Teacher Professional Development Plan

Vice Principal Wang's school also had similar weekly observation arrangement. She told me that lots of new teachers really appreciated it, especially when they first start teaching, because 'sometimes new teachers are not as effective in keeping classrooms in order. Having a mentoring teacher in the classroom as observers can actually keep the students calm and focused. In this way, new teachers can focus first on familiar themselves with teaching routines and be confident in experimenting all the activities designed. After a few weeks, when these young people get a grasp of what usually happens in the classroom, they can multi-tasking better and pay more attention to classroom management'.

LEA officers considered education and pedagogical theories to be one of the most important areas of concern, while school principals and mentoring teachers did not. It could be explained by LEA officers' comment that this was 'division of labour' (LEA officer Zhu). The LEA provided supplementary theoretical support while the focus of the schools was on practical performance. School principals interviewed also argued that most new teachers had gone through trainings in pedagogical theories and, renewal or further pursuit of knowledge would depend mainly on teachers themselves. However, since the content and programme experiences within pre-service programmes were controlled by individual universities and teacher colleges, the programme design of the LEAs and schools' induction programmes usually presume that knowledge contents was well-mastered by student teachers, and therefore, did not take into account or make connections with the various theoretical preparation and practical experiences of pre-service programmes.

4.2.5 Teacher Assessment

As in the UK, where Draper and O'Brien (2006) point out that the induction experience can be shaped by struggling to balance between development and assessment, the context in which new teachers in China work requires evidence of competence so that further certification or promotion can be achieved.

As stated in the context of study, first-year teachers are already qualified teachers. However, for most new teachers who are special teaching post holders, full employment status is not only associated with teacher qualification, but also with whether schools have authorized member of staff positions left. The special teaching posts are created as extra positions and are funded by the central government for a period of three years. The special teaching post regulation states that holders with satisfactory assessment results at the end of the third year will be promoted to full employment status after three years. Yet when promotion is achieved, funding of these new positions must be borne by local government.

It remains to be seen whether local government could handle the financial pressure to secure funding for these new positions. Nevertheless, the assessment of new teachers is still the major concern of all the new teachers who participated in my study since it has everything to do with whether these special teaching post holders can successfully become fully employed.

Assessment of new teachers in Yinchuan includes both formative assessment at LEA and school level, and summative assessment at LEA level. Summative assessment of teacher performance and decisions about continuation of contracts are totally within the jurisdiction of each LEA. Summative assessment of beginning teachers is made by a panel consisting of LEA experts and experienced practitioners, usually in the form of formal observation sessions. After conferring with the school principal, department head, and mentoring teachers, the panel will also take into account individual teacher's performance based on formative assessment performance documented in recorded notes and feedback from mentoring teachers, peer evaluation feedback obtained from formal or informal observations and discussions, student ratings, and student exam results. Probationers will be given formal feedback of their performance and be asked to complete a formal report reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses.

At the school level, all new teachers have a personal profile built up by school management documenting all personal details, such as education background,

assessment records, award and punishment details. Classroom teaching is regarded as the most important part of assessment and all schools have developed their own assessment standard. For example, as the principal of school D (see Appendix 11) explained, ‘we pay close attention to the classroom. What happens before each lesson, what happens in the classroom, and what happens after-class are all assessed and documented. We aim to promote over-all development of new teachers and we believe we are doing a good job’.

Mentoring teacher Huang, a physics teacher at school D, stated that this form was the standard for each department. But each departmental research and teaching office can make adjustment to this assessment standard based on individual subject characteristics. ‘For instance, physics subject assessment form has a section on classroom experiment design and implementation, while music subject form may have a section for artistic display,’ Mr. Huang continued.

School D also required all mentoring teachers to observe new teachers’ teaching for at least one lesson each week. During the weekly teaching and research meeting, new teachers are expected to reflect on their performance based on the feedback provided by their mentors and their self-reflection notes.

Special assessment standard can also be developed to address specific themes. For example, in 2009, several teachers in school C participated in a workshop on student-oriented classroom teaching delivered by the LEA to reinforce the curriculum reform directives. After these teachers reported and presented what they had learnt during the workshop, the Teaching Affairs Office developed a classroom observation schedule to echo these directives. As can be seen from Appendix 12, this assessment standard focuses mainly on student-teacher interaction and student involvement during classroom teaching. Principal Liu of school C commented on the new assessment form:

This shows that our school is able to our own initiative in incorporating new concepts and ideas, and at the same time, developing our own school identity.

Our school has a excellent reputation in art education and art classes require positive classroom atmosphere and active student-teacher interaction.

Apart from the summative assessment duties, LEA officers were also involved in giving classroom support and formative assessment. ‘Although we have very limited number of staff in our department, and maybe we only have one expert for each subject, but we are trying out best to visit each school at least once for observation sessions or workshops’, said Mr. Zhu from Provincial Teaching and Research Office. Appendix 13 shows the assessment form used by LEA officers in enhancing basic teaching skills and qualities in 2009. ‘We aim to start from the very basics, from standard Mandarin to handwriting, from body gesture to facial expression. What we would like to do is to remind young teachers that Rome is not built in a day and an expert teacher starts from mastering the basics’, Mr. Zhu added.

All the participating new teachers in my study are still in their first year of teaching, and therefore, are not yet able to discuss their experiences concerning summative assessment yet. For formative assessment, apart from concerns with student surveys, new teachers all had very positive experience.

Principal Yang suggested that the reason why the formative assessment went so well was that:

The ratings in the assessment standard are not used to suggest that he/she is not a good teacher. These ratings are of course very subjective but it is also a good way to show personal character. So when new teachers receive comments from different teachers with different perspectives, they learn how to balance and reflect.

I did not identify the tension between support for professional development and performance management processes that some studies elsewhere have revealed (Dymoke and Harrison, 2006). This may be because support system and assessment process are both well-incorporated into new teachers’ teaching routines. The support new teachers receive can also be seen as a form of assessment, and the assessment aims to encourage new teachers to take advantage of the support received and improve. One of the advantages of doing so is that the assessment is usually context-specific because new teachers’ performances are observed and assessed in multiple

settings throughout the year. Also, by providing the assessment criteria such as the observation schedule and standard mentioned above, what is expected of the new teachers is clearly clarified and self-reflection or self-assessment element exists in teacher's work routines and assessment processes.

However, As Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002: 115) argue, 'work life in a school and the goals, values and norms underlying it, are to a large degree the object of negotiation and cultural definition processes of the organisation' and although from the school management perspective institutional conformity may appear to be able to reconcile personal goals and institutional goals, the school's official agenda for new teacher development may overpower the teacher's personal agenda. Research elsewhere has found that new teachers usually comply with the dominant values and rarely commit themselves to the processes of cultural negotiation (Lacey, 1977). This point is supported by some mentoring teachers' comments in this study that new teachers usually comply with the dominant exam-culture and curriculum-centred practice when they move to higher grades and really feel the pressure of exams and progression rates. To address these emerging points, new questions, such as are these standards able to capture the complexity of teaching, incorporating knowledge, personal, professional and institutional values as well as teaching skills, need to be asked.

4.2.6 Evaluation

The overall design and implementation of both internal and external programmes was monitored by the Provincial Education Inspection Office at the LEA level. According to Mrs. Heng, current Provincial Education Inspector, questions of supervisory practice, programming options and issues of assessment criteria addressing over-all school-based development activities were raised and inspection was conducted in schools. No specific evaluation plan was specifically developed to address new teacher induction, 'mainly because induction is considered to be part of the teacher professional development continuum and is not a separate policy in Yinchuan,' Mrs. Heng explained.

However, Mrs. Heng told me that the Inspection Office had only four members of staff and even with the support of an external expert panel, it was difficult to conduct thorough inspection. By the time the interviews were conducted, the focus of provincial inspection was on demonstration schools; therefore, none of the schools I visited had yet been evaluated by the Provincial Inspection Office yet.

Therefore, although all observation records and assessment records were documented in teachers' personal files, the evaluation of induction activities actually fell on individual schools. The fact that there was no external evaluation, to some extent, explained the variance between teachers' attitudes towards these activities in different schools, which will be discussed in next section of this chapter.

Elliot and Calderhead (1994) study suggests that mentoring teachers, having their own personal and professional responsibilities, often find themselves struggling in sustain their investment in new teachers' development. Ulvik, Smith, and Helleve (2009) in their study on novice teachers in Norway also revealed that the amount of support new teachers receive is associated with mentoring teachers' personalities and professional ethics. Hence, as Bleach (1999) suggests, the various roles and responsibilities at each administration level need to be clarified and monitored in order to ensure the quality of induction.

4.3. Beginning teachers' expectations about and attitudes towards induction

Day and associates (2007) in their comprehensive study on teachers' lives, work and effectiveness found that teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours are influenced by various factors including personal, situated, and professional elements. McNally and associates (2009) researched specifically on new teachers and also reported that new teachers' learning process is multi-dimensional and is subject to change. These arguments are also supported by other researchers' (Bartell, 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) findings that beginning teachers' expectations and attitudes about induction are shaped by their own induction experiences.

Interview data collected in this study indicates that variances in programme design, subject, school environment and personal situations may interfere with new teachers' expectations and perceptions concerning their own experiences. Teachers are the critical element in any push for successful curriculum reform and educational change (Hoban, 2002). Tickle (2000, 2001) also notes that, for successful induction experiences, it is important to recognise the qualities new teachers bring to their schools and classrooms and appreciate their ability to make contributions and manage their own development. Therefore, this section will focus on new teacher's views on what they considered to be essential areas in terms of support and their perceptions of the induction strategies they actually received.

4.3.1 Support Expected by New Teachers

The main findings of Berliner's study (2001) suggest that expert teachers view teaching much differently from new teachers. Berliner suggests that Schon's (1983) notion of knowledge-in-action best characterises the behaviour of expert teachers since they are capable of making better interpretations and judgement, and they simply 'do things that usually work' (Berliner, 2001: 24). Novice teachers, on the other hand, tend to identify and memorize context-free elements and specific behaviours rather than pre-conceptual the situation in a more holistic manner.

During Phase One of this study, I met all the participating new teachers a month after they started teaching and asked them about their expectations for the support they required. The reason for asking this question a month after starting work was that in this way new teachers would have already had initial knowledge of what the real work situation required and demanded. Their answers were analyzed and categorized into six areas.

4.3.1.1. Subject Knowledge

When asked what challenges and difficulties they had met and what kind of support they required only one month after starting to teach, all new teachers stated that they needed some level of support in the subject knowledge areas.

Teacher Zhang, a Chinese teacher from school G who also held a master's degree in Chinese literature, told me that, 'when I was in secondary school and university, Chinese literature was always my strongest subject. And I had absolutely no doubt that I can teach this subject to the best.' She was quite confident because her auditioning teaching session during her job interview process was also successful and was praised by the interviewers who were expert teachers. However, she soon discovered that, 'after the first week of lesson preparation, I found that learning how to analyze a piece of writing is very different from teaching how to analyze it.' Mrs Zhang continued to tell me, 'as a teacher, I need to explore as many different angles to look at one piece as possible, and reading between the lines, which means it takes hours and hours of research to prepare for one lesson. But my mentor still can give me lots of new interpretations. I guess it is a bit like writing my master's thesis, I need to know when to stop and probably select the most important ones.'

Another case in a way is associated with what Maslow (1968) terms as esteem needs. Maths teacher Zhang from school C was very good at solving Maths problems when he was still a student. He had always been asked by his teachers to write present his answers to other classmates. But the new textbook brought by the curriculum reform raised the difficulty of knowledge points and he was not prepared for it:

When I first received the new Maths textbook for junior one student, I was surprised by how many Maths problems I could not solve. For the past month, the biggest homework for me is to go over all the Maths problems one by one in student exercise books just in case if they ask me in the classroom and I do not know how to answer. That would be embarrassing.

Ms. Xie's case from school B suggested that the need for support in subject knowledge was also urgent for teachers of newly designed subjects such as mental health and moral education subject.

At the university, my major was psychology...now I teach mental health and moral education which is quite different from the traditional moral education subject. But what I studied at university could not really help me with my teaching responsibilities. I am also the student mental health counsellor and sometimes I got confused between my two roles of counsellor who help students and teacher who teach students. This year is the first year moral

education subject changed to mental health and moral education, so my mentor who used to teach moral education is not exactly experienced...both of us have lots to learn at this stage.

4.3.1.2. Student Management.

Berliner (2001) argues that one of the differences between expert teachers and new teachers is that expert teachers are better at getting to know their students and are more sensitive in managing students based on their different developmental stages, cultural factors, gender differences and personalities.

For new teachers in Yinchuan, the first surprise for them was the large classroom size ranging from 40 students to 74 students. Teacher Meng from school D told me that, while he also had around 60 students when he was in secondary school he had no idea what a difficult job it was to manage so many students. Teacher Fu also from school D also told me that he could not even remember all the names because, as a history teacher, he had to teach several classes which means he had more than 200 students. 'How can I get to know all these kids, I can't even remember their names,' said Teacher Fu.

Day and associates (2005) suggest that teacher efficacy is largely associated with student behaviour. Teacher Liu from school F said that she would lose her temper if her students misbehaved in the classroom. She explained to me, 'I have my lesson plan all memorised in my mind, but sometimes when I am interrupted by students chatting in the classroom or their mobile phone ringing, my thinking process breaks off and I could basically blackout.' Having her mentor with her in the classroom helped a great deal, however, she felt a sense of disrespect from her students because they thought she could not manage them.

Student discipline issue was a difficult topic for new teachers. The dream picture portrait by teacher Fu from school D of him and his students sitting on the grass on a sunny day, chatting and laughing together, did not take place everyday. Lots of new teachers expressed their confusion in the amount and form of praise and punishment that could be considered appropriate. Ms. Wang from school E whose students were

mostly from poorer background was worried that punishment may hurt the self-esteem of those students who were already less confident comparing to students from wealthier background. Mr. Fu, on the other hand, was concerned that by punishing his students he might lose the friendship between him and his students. This also led to another shared challenges facing new teachers, ‘should I be their friends?’ Several new teachers reported to be struggling to maintain a stable identity because they sometimes tried to befriend their students, but when their students were out of orders, they tended to become strict teachers. Ms. Liu from school F described it as ‘it is like being a patient of multiple personality disorder’.

Managing students from different cultural background was also reported as problematic. School E was a newly founded government-funded boarding school accommodating mostly students from mountain areas and a poorer background. New teachers in this school reported difficulties in communicating and dealing with these type of students. English teacher Wang heard of the conflicts between students from the city and students from the rural and mountain areas even before she started teaching. ‘I heard lots of cases of poorer students stealing from wealthy students and then it led to group fight. I do not blame these kids. Our principal also said that we need to be patient and considerate in treating these students who suddenly moved to the city and had their whole perspective changed. But as to how to deal with them, I think we are all still learning’, Ms Wang explained.

4.3.1.3. Instruction Skills.

‘Knowing is one thing, but telling is another,’ said Mrs. Zhang from school G. How to form classroom language that was precise and easy to understand, but at the same time, not boring, was quite a challenge for new teachers. Chinese teacher Sun from school B told me that there she showed no instruction skills at her first few classes, ‘I was just recite word by word what I wrote on my notebook and there was nothing hi-tech to it.’

Some part of the difficulty in instructing was caused by the massive classroom size. New teaches struggled to make sure that their students stayed focused. Also

preceeding the pre-set teaching routines claimed a good deal of their attention, new teachers found it hard to attend to other issues such as being more flexible with their teaching content. 'My mentor told me that the pace of teaching is very important, and I need to learn to control it. But when I am in the classroom, the only pace I can control is the speed of my speaking. I actually had one student stopping one day and telling me that I was talking to fast.' Music teacher Xie from school A also experienced an embarrassing moment, 'I originally planned to teach classical music appreciation that day, but my students were chatting very loudly and I could not attract their attention. During the break, I played a few English pop songs and they were so excited. So for the rest of the class, I gave up my teaching plan and just sang English songs with them'. She later said that if she had better instruction skills, she would have attracted her students' attention anyway even with classical music.

The process of new teachers testing and exploring their own beliefs and values and the difficulties in identifying key knowledge points and selecting appropriate teaching content and materials also hindered new teachers' ability to experiment with teaching methods. As History teacher Fu's case showed,

...many teachers who had observed my class found the same problem that I don't interact with the students much. Because the questions I have in mind, are too difficult for my students to answer with their current knowledge base. But on the other hand, if the questions are too easy, I feel like it is an insult to myself. The things I learnt in university and graduate school are way too difficult for junior secondary school students. Guidance is necessary, but it needs time and I have teaching tasks to finish. Now when I teach classes, I stuck in this so-called traditional teaching model of teacher autocracy. I drilled all these information into their heads. I am still trying to figure my way out. I am trying to figure out what questions to ask, how to interact with students.

In facing students from different cultural background, teacher Liu from school E found that students from the city tended to be more responsive and confident in the classroom while students from rural areas more quite and reflective.

'One of the students from the mountain area told me that he was not very confident in speaking his mind because he did not want his accent to be laughed at. But I find his writings very logical and always right to the point. I

hope these students can learn from each other. But at the moment, I do not have a very good idea how to care for students with different learning styles.’

Glickman (1995) suggests that expert teachers are more adaptive and flexible in their teaching and are more conceptual in approaching issues in the classroom and teaching. New teachers, on the other hand, are still developing their conceptual capacities and are not capable of greater degrees of complexity and appear to be more concerned with specific elements of classroom teaching that they encounter as challenging and difficult. This was confirmed in this study, although individual differences did exist. For example, Art teacher Feng from school C had had more than 15 years of experience in learning from private art tutors and, she had also had experiences in teaching young kids painting since she was 18 years old. Although she was as young as the other new teachers, she was fairly experienced and expressed no difficulties in instruction skills area. However, her challenges came mainly from collegial relationships and fitting in the school community.

4.3.1.4. Collegial relationships and interaction.

Today there is growing recognition of the power of school-based professional communities to support teacher learning and improve student learning (Lacey, 1977; Wenger, 1998). New teachers’ accounts documented in this study suggest that new teachers did, to a certain extent, expect to adapt to the language, behaviour, and expectations of the schools in which they worked. The impact of collegial interaction as part of teacher socialization process can be seen through different activities through deliberate design of mentoring or peer support or through informal interactions in the faculty room or professional development activities. However, how new teachers expressed their expectations were different in terms of the strategies they adopted.

Lacey (1977: 72) argues that some new teachers adapt to the school culture and teaching routines through ‘internalized adjustment’, by which he means individuals comply with the preset rules and constraints because they believe it is for the best. Other teachers may adopt the ‘strategic compliance’ in which individuals have

reservations in terms of value judgement or beliefs but still comply with what is required by the authority figure.

For me I think I need to learn to ask and listen before I start doing something. Sometimes I am really confident in my lesson plan and my understanding of the knowledge points, so I am doing my own thing behind the door for a while. But afterwards, I might get very useful comments from my mentor or other teachers, sometimes even corrections because I totally misunderstand the problem (History teacher Zhou, school D).

I am a straightforward person and I tend to say what is on my mind. We were asked to write papers on our initial thoughts on teaching. Some teachers' writings were so fake and I could not help calling them hypocrite. They said that they cared for their students no matter what they did or who they were. But I saw them being much nicer to students whose parents were politicians. So I said on teacher meetings that people should not say things they do not mean. But now I think lots of teachers do not really like me very much (Art teacher Feng, school C).

Teacher Zhou and teacher Feng faced two different situations. When teacher Zhou felt the benefit of consulting the professional community he belonged to, he expected to adjust his behaviour and tried to fit-in. Teacher Feng, on the other hand, did not identify with the self-appraisal culture. However, she expected herself to show some restraint in speaking out her opinions when facing the pressure of collegial relations.

Relationship building was also a challenging topic for some new teachers. These new teachers were first interviewed one month after they started teaching and, at this stage, the new teachers and their mentors were still at the starting phase of their relationship development. Clutterbuck (2004) suggests that at this stage the ideal picture of the mentor could be held by novice. In this study, English teacher Shan from school A referred to his mentor as 'boss' while Teacher Xie described her mentor as 'a father figure'. Teacher Qi found the relationship confusing:

I do not know how closely I should become with my mentor. At the moment, we only know each other on first-name basis. I know nothing about him other than what he teaches and how long he has been teaching. I see some new teachers buying gifts for their mentors or having dinner with their mentors or even go on a short trip together. It is like the university experience all over

again. Some of my classmates are really close with their supervisors, but I never know how to behave around them (Teacher Qi, school A).

What teacher Qi and his college supervisor had could be described as more of a 'sponsor' or 'adviser' type relationship in which the relationship can be relatively aloof and is based on high directives, while his classmates or his colleagues with their mentors he observed had more of 'friend' type relationship in which a close yet highly autonomous relationship could be formed. The data suggests that the new teachers were attempting to interpret situations and the mentor relationship in the workplace.

Communication skills were also considered to be in need of development. Teacher Shan from school A said that it was very important to master 'the art of speaking', although he had 'no idea what that is'. Teacher Ma's quote below also demonstrated new teachers' desire to understand the norms of communication in the workplace.

I am not a very social person. In some situations I do not know what should be said or what should not. For example, we sometimes observe other colleagues' class and we are required to fill in the observation form and give feedback afterwards. I feel it can be problematic because some teachers could feel unhappy being criticized, especially by new teachers. But if I only give some very polite comments, then I do not feel the observation can be as effective as it should be. I guess I need to figure out how to express myself and maintain a good relationship with other teachers (Teacher Ma, school C).

4.3.1.5. Pedagogical Theories

Berliner (2001) argues that expert teachers have a sea of experiences and possess higher conceptual capacity in building their own theories and developing complex understandings of teaching strategies, therefore they know which teaching strategies are the most effective in dealing with the situation they encounter. New teachers tend to associate classroom problems with pre-existing beliefs, theories or guidelines learnt during initial teacher education or earlier experiences.

This was in a sense true as revealed in some cases in my study. Some new teachers reported that they were confused by the clash between the widely publicized student-

centred approach and existing exam-centred practice. Others felt that student-centred teaching was not applicable when the classroom size was so massive.

Teachers like Mr. Fu were not opposed to the teacher-centred classroom; Indeed, he found listening to a teacher with a depth of knowledge and charisma was very enjoyable. When he first started teaching, he also found himself talking most of the time, leaving very little room for student involvement. Music teacher Ma from school G did not mention pedagogical theories because she believed that experiences guided her actions, not books. This again highlights the relationship between theory and practice. Whether new teachers are encouraged to critically reflect on the topic and whether a better connection can be made between the initial teacher education curriculum and the actual classroom at an earlier stage could be further explored.

4.3.1.6. Knowledge of Self

Maslow (1968: 55) describes the self-actualization need to be the desire to actualize what one is potentially capable of becoming. Berliner (2001) suggests that expert teachers can employ self-knowledge in their teaching and develop a personal style. New teachers, on the other hand, are still testing the water.

At a shallower level, new teachers reported to have goals of mastering the technical aspect of teaching or becoming an expert in student management. All teachers were quite confident in themselves and they expressed that they needed more time and experiences. Some teachers learnt about their strengths and weakness during this process. Teacher Liu from school G, for example, told me that ‘I think working with so many colleagues really help me overcome some weaknesses. I am a quite proud person and I usually get quite sour when people criticize anything about me. But with all these helpful teachers around me, I guess I start to realize they are only trying to help.’ This aspect is similar to what Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002: 110) describe as new teachers’ self-interest in investing in the development of their self-confidence in coping with vulnerability. .

On a relatively deeper level, it appeared that, at this early stage, new teachers started to notice their own patterns and preferences in the practice of teaching which might not match the current image of teaching. For example, Art teacher Feng enjoyed her painting lessons when she was a student so much that she had always thought she could bring something new to the art class. However, the real art students in secondary school were faced with tremendous pressure and competition in getting into a good university. She told me that she could not see the sparkle in her students' eyes when they were painting and she did not realize that even painting class can be exam-oriented which made her start having second-thought about her career choice.

This aspect is consistent with what Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002: 111) term as 'coping with visibility' in which new teachers are subjected to the observations of the whole community of practice and, at the same time, be exposed to the explicitly displayed action of others. They argue that new teachers are aware if they disagree or disapprove what happens around them and they are also highly sensitive in terms of how they are perceived by others.

Britzman (1992) describes learning to teach as new teachers' struggle for voice 'in a largely inherited or constraining contexts' (13-14). She notes that danger of suppressed or silenced voices may hinder the development of professional identity of new teachers. Teacher Feng's case helps to illuminate the challenges associated with the competing norms of the exam culture and the beliefs held by herself. Just as Tickle (2001) argues, new teachers, when confronted by challenges of professional growth, are actively engaged in shaping and reshaping their own 'subjective educational theory' but also 'the professional self' (Kelchtermann and Ballet, 2002).

4.3.2 Common Induction strategies experienced by new teachers

Several new teachers mentioned the importance of self-regulation and self-motivation during the interview sessions. However, as Draper and O'Brien (2006) suggest, it is dangerous to assume that all new teachers are internally-motivated individuals and just let them 'swim'. This section of the chapter will focus on the induction strategies mentioned by new teachers and their perceptions of the support

they received. By analyzing new teachers' interview data collected both from Phase One (one month after school year started) and Phase Two (one month before school year ended) interviews, nine common strategies were identified. However, the implementation of these strategies differed and new teachers held different attitudes due to individual needs, induction programme design of each school, and the school's shared goals, as well as the support staff involved.

4.3.2.1 Month-long pre-service training programme

This strategy was mentioned by teachers from a non-teacher education background. Most new teachers received trainings in educational laws and regulation, pedagogical theories, as well as educational psychology. English teacher Wang from school D told me that she was required to take 50 class-hour learning in educational psychology and 60 class-hour learning in pedagogy before she could take the teacher qualification test.

English teacher Shan from school A was the only volunteering teacher from another province. He received one-month intensive training in volunteering teacher camp in Beijing. He said that it was a fascinating cultural experience for him being surrounded by volunteers coming from all over the country. 'This one month was very important for me, because I have no previous training in teaching and this training camp set the mood for me. We had lectures on theories and demonstration sessions from expert teachers. We had a tutor assigned to us to teach us how to understand curriculum standard, analyze textbooks and prepare lesson plans. We were also divided into groups to develop lesson plans and make presentations.'

However, Mr. Shan seemed to be the only teacher who gave positive feedback. Other new teachers received their training at either Ningxia Teacher Training Centre or LEA coordinated programmes. 'It was quite an intense course and we have to learn lots of subjects in one month which probably would take two years for teacher education institution students to learn. So there was no comprehension or understanding, I just memorized the key knowledge points highlighted in the exam

description and prayed that I could pass’, English teacher Yang from school F commented.

Another teacher indicated that: ‘To be honest, we had several students cheating during the final exam. I was pretty sure the exam monitor noticed their behaviour, but he chose to ignore it. I guess he also understand it was not complete the students’ fault, because this training programme is just a bureaucratic procedure and have no real functions’. Teacher Sun from school B suggested that the programme would be much more effective if it was a combination of lectures school-based internships. ‘Maybe the organizers do not think it is necessary since we will start teaching in a month time, but I really think it is necessary to have that replacement experience before everything starts,’ Ms. Sun further commented.

4.3.2.2 Holding a special orientation session for new teachers

Volunteering teacher Shan was the only teacher who specially mentioned this arrangement. He was one of the volunteers from relatively developed areas participating in central government’s initiatives to sending new graduates to less-developed areas or rural areas to relieve the employment pressure, he was personally welcomed by the Deputy Mayor and was invited to a reception. ‘It was a sumptuous feast,’ Mr. Shan told me.

A Helpful element of the orientation session mentioned by new teachers was the provision of brochures introducing the school history and campus map, key person contact list, personal roster of all members of staff, introduction session given by principals and school management team, class assignment and so on. Teacher Luo from school B suggested that ‘I did not get all the materials at once and I had to come to school office several times to make sure that I got everything. Actually all the materials could be prepared beforehand give to us at the same time’.

Teachers from other cities or provinces particularly found this event to be more memorable than teachers who were local. Teacher Chang from School A and teacher Jia from school D who were both from Shanxi province found it to be a warm

arrangement since they had no contacts in the city and it was the perfect occasion to meet other new teachers. Teacher Jia told me that she finally found someone during the orientation session to have lunch and dinner together. However, local teachers did not report favourable attitudes and teacher Luo described it as ‘just another party’.

Moreover, all new teachers in this study reported that they had never seen an induction policy document and they had no knowledge of official induction policy directives. Some new teachers, like Mr. Fu, even stated that there was no point getting to know the policy directives because he could do nothing to improve or change them. It seemed that a lack of communication between the LEA level, schools and new teachers existed and, even if it was caused by the limitation of policy making and implementation system, an orientation session could still be a good opportunity to incorporate elements of policy description.

4.3.2.3 Providing accommodation and catering service for new teachers

Breaux and Wang (2003) argue that having physiological and safety needs met is what is on new teachers’ mind when they first start teaching. Studies on new teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Imig and Imig, 2006; Johnson, 2004) reveal that workplace and living conditions have great impact on teacher attitudes and performance.

In the previous section about new teachers’ expectations, physiological and safety needs were not identified by new teachers mainly for the reason that most new teachers in Yinchuan who were in need of accommodation were provided with free dormitory or single apartment at very low cost. Teacher Fu and teacher Chang, along with many other new teachers, all praised this arrangement. All schools also had their own cafeteria where teachers were given a food subsidy to buy breakfast.

However, new teachers noticed differences in workplace conditions. Teacher Fu from school C, a relatively small urban school, found the school buildings and availability of teaching resources less satisfactory compared to school D which was a

large newly-founded school incorporating four campus with brand new buildings and with ICT equipment installed in all classrooms.

4.3.2.4 Assigning new teachers to lower grades

All participating new teachers were assigned to the lowest grades in either junior secondary schools or senior secondary schools. Chinese teacher Sun from school B described this strategy as ‘very reasonable’ since ‘the curriculum and textbook content is relatively easier for us to understand.’ ‘I am only 23 years old and senior students are usually 17 or 18 years old. They probably would not see me as their teachers but big sisters or even peers’, history teacher Zhou from school D said. Interestingly, during the second phase interview, teacher Liu from school F, a junior secondary schools, reported that freshmen students in her classroom were relatively easy to manage compared to senior students after organizing the school new year gala; while teacher Wang from senior secondary school heard from her mentor that senior students realised the importance of university entrance exams and tended to work much harder than freshmen.

History teacher Fu from School D commented that teaching the lower grades could prevent them from facing the pressure of high school entrance examination or university entrance examination too soon; even though he already felt that exam subjects were given more attention from students while optional subjects were relatively ignored.

Chinese teacher Kang from school C recognised that it was the three-year cycle arrangement designed by her school management. ‘The first three years of teaching in our school is the exploration period. Only after completing this three year cycle we can finally stop calling ourselves new teachers,’ teacher Kang told me. Teacher Liu from school E commented that it was the step-by-step progression he expected because knowledge and experience would accumulate, and at the end of the third year, he would have a better understanding of how students progress.

4.3.2.5 Reducing new teachers' non-teaching duties

Fantilli and McDougall's (2009) study on new teachers in Canada reported that having ample time to prepare for the teaching assignment was rated the second higher by the participants. Participants in this study welcomed relief from non-teaching duties as a means of providing them with more time to prepare for lesson plans.

In their first school term (during which time the Phase One interviews were conducted), all new teachers were not required to take on non-teaching duties. Issues concerning classroom and student management were mainly handled by mentoring teachers and new teachers were encouraged to observe and assist when they had ample time.

Teacher Meng from school D welcomed this strategy during the phase one interview: 'all new teachers in our school do not have non-teaching duties. We are asked to observe or maybe even assist our mentors to do tasks such as managing cleaning duties or organizing morning self-study sessions. But these activities are on a volunteer basis and we can focus mainly on classroom teaching. Teacher Wang from school C also expressed her relief that she did not need to fulfil non-teaching duties: 'making lesson plans and studying curriculum already wear me out. I do not know how I could squeeze more time for other duties.'

In their second school term (during which time the Phase Two interviews were conducted), this strategy was appreciated even more by new teachers, especially by those who took on assistant class director roles. New mentors who were experienced class directors were assigned to all new teachers who decided to take on or were selected for an assistant class director role. Being an assistant class director meant more non-teaching duties for new teachers as they were partially responsible for all the class routines and school activities, such as monitoring classroom cleaning, organizing morning exercise session, parent-teacher meetings. But 'luckily', as Teacher Zhang from school G commented, most work was still done by their mentors and they were given the opportunity to observe how their mentors work.

Teacher Fu from school C found himself having to get up an hour earlier than before because, as assistant class director, he was required to be in the classroom before 7am to make sure the classroom was cleaned and no students were late for the self-study session.

As mentioned before, meeting the needs of large classroom and large student population was one of the challenges for all new teachers, regardless of the subject. Reducing new teachers' duties allowed them to catch their breath and learn from experienced mentors.

4.3.2.6 Holding regular departmental teaching and research section meetings

Bartell (2005) suggests that one of the most important ingredients of an effective induction is to put aside time for teachers to work together. All of my participants reported taking part in the regular departmental teaching and research section meetings for individual subject departments which usually took place once a week and lasted for about one or two hours. The participating members in the meetings were usually comprised of a head of the teaching and research section who was usually an experienced and expert teacher of the subject, all the senior teachers and beginning teachers, and from time to time the principal/deputy principal who was responsible for the said subject department.

All of my participants reported positively about this particular strategy with focus on different aspects that they found helpful. Teacher Luo from School B, for example, regarded the weekly meetings for physics department as an important opportunity where her lesson plans could be improved and her understandings of the key and difficult points in the textbooks could be checked by experienced members in the group. 'For the first few weeks I have been walking on my tiptoes as I am not so sure if my lesson plan is as sophisticated as other beginning teachers,' she told me, 'and it is reassuring for me when I could listen to how the others do it when everyone shares his/her lesson plan during the meetings'.

For Teacher He from School F, the weekly meetings were essential for her to get to know the other experienced teachers and to learn from them. 'I get along very well with my fellow beginning teachers', she said to me smiling, 'but sometimes I get really annoyed when they talk too much during the weekly meetings. I'd rather hear more from the experts in the group talking because what they say can be so nutritious'.

For Teacher Fu, the weekly meetings were also a place where he familiarized himself with the administrative procedures such as making and submitting lesson plans, documenting student homework and performance, writing reflection notes for his lesson plans, all of which would be compulsory during the teacher assessment at the end of each semester.

Teacher Wang from School E described the weekly meetings as a place where she could be reminded of the prioritised issues. 'Sometimes I would add elements to my lesson plan to make my (English) lessons fun and entertaining,' she said to me, 'it is nice to have other colleagues and my mentor to remind me of the key and difficult points which I need to cover and how I could associate the fun stuff with these important knowledge points'. She reflected on her experience with the weekly meetings: 'I think an important lesson for me is that I now realised that I am working with a team of teachers in the same grade and we need to have a common understanding as to what should be taught to all the students instead of just thinking about my students or my preferences'.

The only teacher who found weekly meetings not as helpful was Teacher Xie from School B. As a newly founded subject, mental health and moral education section in Teacher Xie's school was only consisted of two members including Teacher Xie and her mentor. For Teacher Xie, she could learn about how to cope with unexpected problems in the classroom and instruction techniques, but not about academic knowledge and skills or curriculum content knowledge because her mentor was new to this new curricula as well.

4.3.2.7 Assigning mentors to new teachers

Assigning mentors to new teachers was the most common induction strategy that was described as compulsory by LEA officials and school principals and as most valuable and beneficial by my participants. Most beginning teachers would be working with one mentor in their own subject department. For beginning teachers who also took on assistant class director roles, an experienced class director would also be selected to act as their mentoring teacher as well.

In practice the emphasis and interpretation of mentor's work varied as reported by my participants. Working with mentors involved different activities which mainly fell into three categories. Firstly, beginning teachers were required to observe mentoring teachers practice in the classroom and being observed regularly by their mentors. My participants reported focuses of observation on both specific skills such as classroom language or blackboard handwriting to more sophisticated skills such as dealing with behaviour problems or unexpected situations. 'Watching my mentor go to work is always a joy', said Teacher Kang from School C, 'she is such a bubbly person and I like to see how she makes everyone laughs. It is very helpful when you teach the first lesson in the morning or afternoon when everyone including me is sleepy'. Teacher Fu from School C suggested the feedback from his mentor was very practical: 'we focus on analysing specific problems. For example, when my mentors said that I talked too much in my class, now I start to train my students' presentation and public speech skills'.

Beginning teachers were also required to provide oral or written notes on what they thought they could learn from their mentors. 'I do find providing comments very helpful for me personally', commented Teacher Zhang from School G, 'sometimes unless you put your thoughts into words and speak them out loud, you do not really own these thoughts and you may forget them very soon'.

Secondly, beginning teachers were required to work closely with mentors on the whole process of lesson planning including learning about and analysing curriculum content and textbooks, making and revising lesson plans, observing and assessing

each lessons, marking student homework and documenting student performance, communicating with students and parents, and so on. For example, Teacher Fu learnt a great deal from her class director mentor:

My mentor has worked as a class director for over 10 years and she is very experienced. She has taught me a lot of important things such as constantly communicating with subject teachers to get prompt response concerning student performance. It would be too late to intervene when things are out of control. Also I have learnt a lot about classroom discipline issues such as what is a proper punishment for being late for school or for chatting during class.

Thirdly, mentoring teachers also worked as personal and professional consultants and coaches when beginning teachers were capable of teaching and planning on their own. The constant observation from the tutors would gradually turn into pre- and post-lesson discussions in the later stage of the first year where beginning teachers and mentors could reinforce the significant issues such as key and difficult points in the textbooks.

Beginning teachers would take more responsibility at this stage. Teacher Yang from School F told me: 'If my mentor is with me in the classroom, I really do not know if my students behave well because of her or me. But now when I am flying on my own, I would now if I am doing right or wrong'. Teacher Feng also received advice from her mentor about how to maintain good relationships with colleagues when she spoke out other's inadequacies in public. She received encouragement from her mentor for being straightforward and keeping true to herself but she accepted her mentor's suggestions that sometimes act spoke louder than words.

4.3.2.8 Informal and formal observations

Informal and formal observations were reported by all my participants as an important part of induction. Based on the reported functions from my participants, the observation sessions could work in many different ways.

Beginning teachers reported participating in both informal and formal observations which provided them with opportunities to observe how expert, experienced, and other beginning teachers teach. The sites of observation could vary from their own

department to classrooms in another school to district training centres or video recordings of expert teachers.

Teacher Xie from School B found this strategy extremely helpful as she got to make friends with mental health and moral education teachers from other schools and in a way be involved in the larger community where she did not have access to in her own school. 'It is just really comforting to see other beginning teachers having the same issues I do,' she told me, 'and we could work together on these issues and learn from the best in the subject'.

For Teacher Zhou from School E, observations provided her opportunities to observe how her mentor talked to her students and behaved in the classroom. 'Sometimes just looking at her facial expressions is helpful for me. When she smiles I feel relaxed and when she is frowning I get nervous' she told me, 'it reminds me that I need to pay attention to my expressions in the classrooms as well.' But on the other hand, Teacher Zhou also felt that she was not comfortable enough in these settings to actually provide feedback especially when observing experienced teachers' lessons. 'I am still a new teacher after all,' she told me, 'I am not sure if my opinions are of any importance at all'.

For Teacher Shan from School A, the best part was that he could walk into any classroom, including that of his mentor or other colleagues, to observe and learn. 'It is helpful to learn from other teachers who also teach English,' he told me, 'but it is also inspiring to learn from teachers of other subjects. For example, our deputy principal is an expert and very famous physics teachers and is loved by almost everyone. I like to visit his classroom from time to time to experience his charms and see how he engages his students in such a difficult subject'.

Teacher Meng from School D preferred to observing normal classrooms instead of demonstration or open lessons. 'I like to see how teachers interact with students in normal situations,' he told me, 'demonstration lessons are just so well-rehearsed that I think every teacher could achieve that level when he/she gets the chance to practice

for so many times'. Teacher Zhang from School G, on the other hand, found demonstration lessons more useful as she focused primarily on how these teachers analyzed Chinese literature in the textbooks and what kind of interpretations they made instead of classroom interactions. This echoes Hagger and McIntyre's (1994) findings that student teachers usually have different objectives when they observe which may include learning to see other teacher's perspectives, a language for talking about teaching, different ways of doing things or access to experienced teachers' craft knowledge.

Beginning teachers were also regularly observed both formally and informally, by a number of visitors in and out of their schools including fellow beginning teachers, mentoring teachers, experienced colleagues, department heads and school principals, and LEA officials and experts.

For formative assessment purposes, teachers were usually given an observation guide which provided a list of points to focus on when they went to observe a teacher teach, a feature which is considered to be helpful by Berliner (1989) who argues that beginning teachers might need to help to know what they should be looking for. Most observers would also be asked to provide feedback and constructive criticisms after each session. As to informal observations, beginning teachers needed to prepare for unexpected visitors and would be able to have a discussion with the visitors in an informal setting after class.

Formal or informal observations, the suggestions and feedback provided by other teachers could encourage beginning teachers to reflect on their work. Take Teacher Fu from School D for instance, he pondered on the feedback given by his mentor and other colleagues that he did not interact with his students enough. 'Now when I teach classes, I stuck in this so-called traditional teaching model of teacher autocracy. I drilled all these information into their heads,' he told me, 'I am still trying to figure my way out. I am trying to figure out what questions to ask, how to interact with students'.

4.3.2.9 Teaching competitions

Teacher Fu participated in city-wide teaching competitions, the participants of which included both beginning and experienced teachers. For Teacher Fu, taking part in the teaching competition was an experience of confidence building. ‘Our school assigned teachers and students to help me practice’, he told me, ‘I have only been working for 2 months. I competed in the competition and I won the first place. I was very happy, so was our director of teaching affairs and our principal’.

Teacher Fu also paid his gratitude to his mentor and other colleagues for helping him. Nevertheless, he considered this learning process to be deeply personal. ‘We also have other teachers to help me in our school’, he said, ‘but generally speaking, the difficulties I have in teaching need to be solved by myself. These things are not to be understood by listening to other people, I need to explore by myself’.

However, the opportunity to participate in this type of competition was scarce and both Teacher Feng from School C and Teacher Liu from School F reported their disappointment for not being able to be selected to participate. Teacher Liu, for example, questioned the candidate selection process as she did not consider the beginning teacher selected as more competent than her or her other colleagues and she suspected that she was only selected because she was a close relative of a member of the school management.

4.4. Summary and Discussion: Characteristics of Secondary School Induction Arrangement in Yinchuan – a Culture of Mentoring

Judging from the perspectives of LEA officials, school principals and mentoring teachers, it could be suggested that induction programmes in Yinchuan city was largely focused on the concerns and needs of beginning teachers as perceived by these participating supporters over this particular stage of development in learning to teach. This echoes Paine, Fang and Wilson (2003: 80) studies on the induction system in Shanghai city where induction, although not to be regulated as a separate and clearly stated policy, is still a significant ‘phase’ of teacher education and

training and is described as ‘a dynamic process’ which is deeply rooted in the professional culture of teacher education in China.

With regard to the ‘phase’ comment, this is visible as reported by LEA officials who embraced the stages of teacher development (MoE, 2001: 12) similar to Berliner’s (2001) notion of teachers developing through different stages from novice to expert. For LEA officials, the focus of teacher induction was considered to be laying on three elements including education law and regulations and professional ethics, education and pedagogical theory, and practical teaching and instructional skills; while school principals and mentoring teachers suggested that induction should comprise elements of education law and regulations and professional ethics, subject knowledge, and practical teaching and instructional skills.

One explanation for the difference which is similar to the case of Shanghai, according to Paine, Fang and Wilson (2003), is that the administrative system places LEA in the middle ground between central government policy and schools where common goals need to be supported and cohesions need to be maintained. Another explanation offered by Paine, Fang, and Wilson (2003) is that the top-down educational reform which focuses on the reform of pedagogical theories behind teaching and learning is to be reinforced at LEA level where school practices still focus primarily on traditions and are largely shaped by the unchanging exam culture. Beginning teachers, on the other hand, as Berliner (2001) suggests, had more context-specific and personal expectations from induction programmes as they expressed needs in learning about subject knowledge, student management, instructional skills, collegial relationships and interaction, pedagogical theories and knowledge of self.

As to the ‘dynamic process’ comments, it refers, not only to the variation between central policy and local practice, but also to the variety of activities that beginning teachers are required to participate at both LEA and school level, although the participation of LEA was not as evidential from beginning teachers’ perspectives as perceived by LEA officials themselves and the partnerships between possible support

providers such as university was missing from the conversation. The dynamic process is also related to what Maynard and Furlong (1993) suggest that the development of teacher expertise can be accompanied by the personal concerns of beginning teachers including early idealism, survival needs, and adaptation to the school bureaucratic.

This takes the discussion back to the different views about the purpose of induction. Draper and O'Brien (2006: 12-13) suggest that induction could be considered as an opportunity for 'proving competence or developing practice' as well as 'a time where support is offered'. According to the more developing assumption of induction, it is important see induction as a phase in the continuous process of professional development where development in classroom instructions, pedagogical practices, and personal dimensions are all emphasized and contribution from beginning teachers is recognised. The more proving assumption, on the other hand, primarily considers assessment as the key element of induction and the priority is to evaluate whether beginning teachers are qualified or good enough for their job.

As Draper and O'Brien (2006) points out, both views are able to enrich the concept of induction. But the difficulty lies in the process of balancing or combining both views. It is especially the case for countries like China and Japan, as suggested by Paine, Fang, and Wilson (2003), where pre-service teacher training provides very limited actual classroom experiences. As both features can be seen as reported by my participants, it is still difficult to assess the extent to which support and assessment is balanced. But it is visible to see the main characteristic of the induction practice in Yinchuan which features the term *mentoring*.

The term mentoring and induction are frequently used interchangeably (Wong, 2004; Ingersoll and Smith, 2004). It probably is the case for my participants in Yinchuan city as the term mentoring make the connection to the main support provider, the mentoring teachers, and to the curriculum vision that links what teachers are required to learn (Paine, Fang, and Wilson, 2003). Of course, the term mentoring here is not

to be limited to specifically mentors but the practice of mentoring which involves a variety of activities.

Hagger and McIntyre (1994), based on their study on ITT team in the UK, suggest that mentoring is a multi-faceted concept which comprises elements of professional and personal development. According to Draper and O'Brien (2006), this requires a rigorous notion of professional development and debate over what is the preferred outcomes. For Hagger and McIntyre (1994), it involves competence-based assessment for novice teachers. In my study, this takes the form of regular formal and informal observations along with weekly meetings.

Brooks, Sikes, and Husbands (1997) suggests that mentoring should be conceptualized as a discrete process which incorporates different strategies and requiring high-level skills from the mentors. This is evident in my study as different forms of mentoring activities including collaborative working with mentors and coaching and supervising. As Brooks, Sikes and Husbands (1997) points out, this notion of mentoring also put emphasis on both mentor's and beginning teachers' personal qualities and interpersonal skills as the nature of professional relationships formed between both parties is key to the success of mentoring. Allsop (1994) takes it further by pointing out the effect of mentoring on transmitting values and attitudes from mentors to beginning teachers in terms of pedagogical understandings, institutional arrangements and practice.

These views are supported by Wang (2002) who suggests that there are three main perspectives of mentoring practice. Firstly, mentoring is considered to be helping process in which beginning teachers' maladjustment and survival needs are put to the forefront (Gold, 1996). Secondly, mentoring teachers are considered to technical experts providing practical guidance to help students adapt into the current culture of teaching. Thirdly, mentoring is considered to be a reflective process in which mentoring teachers work with beginning teachers towards improving the quality of teaching and innovating or transforming the current practice and culture (Calderhead, 1992).

These three views are closely related to Maynard and Furlong's (1993) three models of mentoring which are termed as apprenticeship, competency, and reflective practitioner. According to Maynard and Furlong (1993), these three models feature in a sequential order in the process of learning and teach. As to my study, mentoring teachers work as coach and role models as well as key persons in formative and summative assessment of beginning teachers show element of the apprenticeship and competency model. What is missing is the reflective practitioner model or the third point mentioned above on transforming current practice and culture. The beginning teachers in my study indeed participate in reflective practice with regard to their instructional skills or lesson plans. But this practice is more in line with Franke and Dahlgren's (1996) notion of a 'master-apprentice' model with an emphasis on beginning teachers' teaching methods and daily practices which is different from the personally and politically driven reflective practice as described by Calderhead and Gates (1993).

This reminds me of the difference in the perceived focus of induction between LEA officials and school staff. As Elliot and Calderhead (1994) suggests, the mentoring relationship or induction practice can be a dominant source for beginning teacher development which might override any external agenda for educational change or reform. Therefore, they note that successful educational change might need to embrace the current celebration for personal empowerment, autonomy, and critical analysis from beginning teachers. The concept of challenge is relative here. Taking their notion of a balance between support and assessment, Draper and O'Brien (2006) also incorporate the concept of autonomy into play in a sense that the amount autonomy teachers have may have impact on their freedom in pursuing a different style or method of teaching.

This is similar to what McNally and Martin (1998) refer to as the three mentor typologies. A 'laissez-faire' mentor is not keen on challenging and intervening which transfers the responsibility to the student to develop at their own pace. An imperial mentor acts as an interventionist and challenges the beginning teachers' ideas and

behaviours at the risk of overpowering beginning teachers' independent thinking with his/own beliefs. A collaborative mentor, described by McNally and Martin (1998) as the most effective type, encourages beginning teachers to take risks with adequate support and engages them in a critically reflective process.

The purpose of discussing this is not to change the focus to mentors but to explore the kind of experience that beginning teachers might be able to enjoy when encountering different types of induction/mentoring environment. I agree with Daloz (1986: 213) who argues that the function of having the freedom to challenge is to 'open a gap between the student and the environment, a gap that creates tension in the student, calling out for closure'. As Kagan (1992) points out, this productive tension could enable beginning teachers to challenge not only their own pre-existing images and knowledge acquired but also the culture of practice they are inducted into. Wang and Odell (2002: 497), from a critical-constructivist stance, also suggest that the fundamental goal of learning should be to continuously transform existing knowledge and practice through 'emancipator ends'.

However, even though high levels of support and challenge, high level of support and assessment, is likely to lead to growth, the challenges also lie in the wider context in which teachers' professional learning took place. Elliot and Calderhead (1993) suggest that the possible reasons for insufficient challenge may due to the mutual respect between mentoring teachers and beginning teachers or a consensus to 'a conspiracy of silence' to avoid the conflict or sensitive issues in relation to assessment. Elliot and Calderhead (1993) explain further by stating that challenge is more likely to take place in schools where school culture encourages and awards challenge and critical reflection. But as Wang (2002) suspects, with the contrived organization in schools and centralized curriculum in China along with its deeply rooted exam-culture, the extent to which beginning teachers and mentoring teachers might be able to engage in challenge and debate over the purpose of education/schooling or the teaching methods is limited.

This is perhaps why it is so important to help beginning teachers develop a sense of professional identity and an inquiry stance to be able to teach ‘against the grain’ (Cochran-Smith, 2004: 16). Having mentoring teachers and support staff who are capable of teach ‘against the grain’ is certainly essential. However, as Furlong (2000) points out, teachers who do teach against the grain might not be selected as mentoring teachers or even survive a contrived teaching culture.

The concept of induction has obviously goes beyond the sink or swim metaphor or the view of beginning teachers working in isolation on a deserted island (Edwards and Collison, 1996). An emphasis on teacher identity, in my opinion, could be valuable in the Chinese context as attentions could be given to debate over values and moral purposes of teaching and being a teacher. As Goodson (2003: 132) comments, ‘teaching is, above all, a moral and ethical vocation, and a new professionalism needs to reinstate this as the guiding principle’. Therefore, induction for beginning teachers should not only focus on classroom teaching or subject knowledge but also ‘when, where, how and why to use particular approaches’ as understood by individual teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001: 1018). The next three chapters utilize the theoretical themes of teacher identity to explore the personal dimensions of learning to teach.

Chapter 5 Job Motivation

5.1. Overview

Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994) consider ‘job motivation’, a term used to refer to the motives that influence people’s decisions in starting, staying in or leaving a career in teaching, to be one of the important aspects of a teacher’s professional identity.

Studies on factors attracting students to teaching as a career reveal intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Lortie, 1975; Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000; Moran, Kilpatrick, Abbott, Dallat, & McClune, 2001). Intrinsic motivations include factors such as personal satisfaction and enjoyment of the subject; extrinsic motivations include factors such as social mobility, employment and job security that are not inherent in teaching activity itself. Research findings also highlight altruistic motivation, which deals with seeing teaching as a socially worthwhile job, as a major factor (Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000).

Of course, as many researchers have pointed out (Nias, 1989; Huberman, Grounauer and Marti, 1993), there is no single cause or easy explanation for career decisions. Huberman, Grounauer and Marti (1993) suggest that findings from empirical studies that focus on teachers’ motivations for entering their careers are sometimes contradictory as there is usually a multitude of contextual factors along with various motives that come into play. There are personal, social, cultural and professional influences that continue to shape and reshape teachers’ expectations and perceptions of themselves as teachers.

Huberman, Grounauer and Marti (1993) also suggest that, apart from understanding why new teachers make the decision to start teaching, it is important to document the evolution of motives later in teachers’ careers. They are concerned with why teachers continue in the profession and, for example, if entering into the teaching profession is influenced for purely economic reasons in the first place, ask if such a person might

think and behave differently from teachers who entered the profession due to more altruistic motives?

In order to explore the evolution of teachers' motives, Bullough, Knowles and Crow (1990) suggest that it is important to look at teachers' lives as a process of the development of a professional self-concept. Their study on student teachers reveals that metaphors are frequently used to conceptualise aspects of the self by student teachers, though these are usually found to be unrealistic later as the teachers continue to explore and reassess themselves and their work situations.

This process of self-discovery echoes what Calderhead and Shorrock (1997: 16) described as 'a more deliberative form of reflection in which teachers engage', compared with Schon's notion of reflection-in-action which places particular emphasis on practical experience. They suggest that when teachers start thinking more about the personal and professional goals, the value of their work, and the general purposes of education, the practice of reflection is more 'searching, philosophical and critical'.

This concept of reflection is also evident in Nias's (1989) studies of primary teachers which allow teachers' own voices to be heard. Hoyer (1996: 96) points out that what makes Nias' work stand out is the fact that the term 'reflection' is not used as simply a way of interpreting the teachers' responses, rather, she utilises the aspects of motivational and self-concept theory, for example, Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of need and Herzberg and associates' (1959) two factor theory, i.e. 'hygiene factors' (dissatisfiers) and motivators (satisfiers), which take into consideration of 'a quasi-psychological dimension' of the 'self' as relevant to reflection. Such an approach allows for both the personal and professional aspect of the practice of reflection to be viewed as a part of the teaching process, with an emphasis on teacher motivation.

The stance adopted by Nias (1989) highlights the concept of 'self' which is the key initiator of reflection, introspection and motivation. By doing so, she acknowledges the total involvement of the whole individual in the teaching role, where Mead's

(1934: 174) notion of 'ego' and Freudian concept of 'untamed emotions' (Salzberger-Wittenberg et al, 1983) are synthesized in acknowledging both the social and emotional aspect of the self. Similarly, Tickle's (1999) and Hargreaves' (1998; 2001) work reinforce the idea of the emotional aspects of the self and teaching as an emotional labour, in reports on the experiences of newly qualified teachers as well as experienced teachers.

The work of Polanyi (1962) regarding 'personal knowledge' and Hopkins's (1985) definition of 'self knowledge', both help us to understand the all encompassing nature of the 'self' in the teaching and learning experience. Nias's work has been included here, not in order to enter into the psychological debate regarding the complexities associated with the conceptualization of the 'self', but rather to substantiate the stance taken by the interview respondents which emerged from the transcripts, and which afforded a total involvement of the 'self' in the teaching process (Hoye, 1996).

Such totality of involvement was evident in all career stages constructed in teachers' narratives in my study. Firstly, what attracted participating teachers to ITT programmes and ultimately the teaching profession reflected where they came from and the early influences of schooling. Secondly, consciously or unconsciously, new teachers in this study found it difficult to differentiate personal and professional goals, viewing them not only in relation to teacher's work but also as a whole person. Thirdly, it was evident in relation to the personal investment made to be a teacher which revealed the emotional and social aspect of the self in teaching. Lastly, participants of this study constantly analysed their actions in relation to their personal and professional goals and their work in the classroom as they tried to make sense of their new experiences.

This section addresses the issue of initial and later motivations, in order to capture the changes that took place during the first year of teaching. It tries to understand how initial motives evolve over time. To pursue this topic, questions were intentionally designed for my participants. Participating new teachers were asked a set of questions concerning how they came to teaching, what they liked or disliked about

their work, and their professional desires in the first and second semester during the first year of teaching. The findings of my study are broadly in line with other studies, but with some differences which will be discussed in detail below.

5.2. Entry into the Profession

5.2.1. Entry into the ITT Programme

Deciding where to go to college was not an easy decision and all participants went through an evaluation process, as multiple factors came into play in making the decision to ITT rather than being influenced by a single factor.

Teacher Zhou from School G came from a family of teachers. Her father was a secondary school history teacher and her mother was a Chinese teacher. She said that the decision-making process was easy because both her parents and herself were on board with the idea of her being a teacher. ‘It just seems natural for me after seeing my parents work in schools since I was a kid’, she said. Growing up in a suburban county of Yinchuan city, Zhou’s family was not the wealthiest but, as she described it, ‘led a happy and comfortable life’. ‘My parents told me that they would set their minds at rest because they knew their little girl would become a teacher with a stable and comfortable future ahead of her.’

‘When I was in primary school, I always received extra attention from my neighbours or my own teachers because my parents were well-respected in their schools...some of my parents’ students got into very prestigious universities. These students and their parents were always grateful to my parents. Our house was always packed with students coming to visit my parents. I want that too’, teacher Zhou said. ‘I still remember that, from time to time, my parents would bring students home with them for dinner because some students’ parents were farmers or migrant workers and were too busy to even cook for their children’, teacher Zhou told me, ‘I don’t know why, but sometimes I just have the urge to take care of children too’.

Teacher Zhou represented a group of early career teachers who started teacher education with an explicit motivation and a strong intention to enter teaching. Their

reasons for choosing teacher education were closely related to early identification with the teaching profession due to influences of family and teacher role models.

Extrinsic motivations, however, were evident in all participating new teachers' narratives. For teachers from relatively poor background, the reason for choosing ITT was not necessarily an intrinsic one. Teacher Chang from School A came from a small village in northern China. His father, a rural school primary school teacher, was the sole income provider of the family. With aging parents and two younger children in the family, Chang's father struggled to pay for Chang's university tuition fees. 'Students in ITT programme received state scholarships and monthly allowance which was very attractive to me', said Teacher Chang. Chang's university entrance exam scores were among the best in the village school he attended. 'But comparing to students in fancy schools in the big cities, my scores were just average', he told me. Chang had to give up his dream university because his score was not as high as he had hoped and also because of the financial situation, but still, 'my whole village was excited when I was accepted by the university because not many children from our village have the opportunity to receive higher education'. 'Being in the ITT programme, I spared my parents and I the burden of a huge loan. Plus, at that time, I thought I can always choose not to be a teacher when I graduate, having obtained a bachelor's degree', he said to me, 'that's also the reason why I chose to study computer science, it's very flexible'.

For teachers like Chang, the choice for teacher education was based on extrinsic motivation (Sinclair, 2008); and they had, by comparison with others, lower intention to enter teaching. Teacher education was considered as a way to earn a bachelor degree that offered multiple employment options, also outside teaching.

In some cases, the participant ended up in ITT programme rather 'accidentally'. Teachers from a relatively wealthier environment had more options in deciding what to study. However, some choices were limited by university entrance exam scores. Teacher Luo from School B grew up in a suburban family. Her parents were both farmers who sold their land many years ago and started their own business. Teacher

Luo failed her university entrance exam and her score was below the second-rated university entrance standard. However, her parents were able to pull some strings and secure a spot at a teacher education college at the expense of a fair amount of sponsorship fees. ‘My parents run a small family business,’ teacher Luo told me, ‘they were always at the centre of my whole extended family because they are able to bring in a lot of money’. ‘My parents did not seem to care about what subject I should study, they just hoped that I could get a university degree as soon as I can and then help them with their business. I did not want to go through the senior year in high school again, so even though I did not like ITT programme, I had to live with it’, said Teacher Luo.

Teacher Fu from School C received the wrong programme description from his chosen university and found himself in an ITT programme which he intentionally tried to avoid. His parents, who were also teachers in a city school, did not encourage him to become a teacher as they were concerned with the teacher’s social status and treatment. ‘On the prospectus of Ningxia University we received in Shandong province, there was no ‘teacher education’; only a history major,’ he told me, ‘and after I came here and I took a look at the programme, it turned out to be a teacher education programme’.

5.2.2 Entry into Teaching

With no surprise, after graduation, teacher Zhou immediately applied for teaching jobs in Yinchuan city. ‘My parents wanted me to live in a city not too far from home, so schools in Yinchuan were the best choice’, she said to me. Teacher Zhou did not consider other career options, as she told me, ‘this is what I’ve always wanted to do’. Her job application process went on smoothly and, after participating in a three-round selection process, soon she received a job offer from one of the largest comprehensive senior secondary schools in the city. ‘I like to think that I am suitable for teaching’, teacher Zhou told me, ‘especially after my placement experience in a junior high school, students there called me an amiable big sister’.

Teacher Chang's job hunting process was not as successful. Not aiming for a job in teaching, teacher Chang first tried to apply for several positions in IT companies. 'Most jobs available for newly graduates were short-term. I was usually employed on a project for a few weeks and then let go when the project was completed', Chang told me, 'it meant that I was constantly worried about where I was going to get my pay cheque tomorrow'. Apart from the pressure of feeding himself, Chang was also helping his father to support his younger siblings' university tuition fees which put even greater pressure on him in finding a job with stable income.

'I was desperate at that time and the prospect of the job market was not so optimistic, that's when I took my father's advice and applied for a teaching job'. To his surprise, even getting a teaching job was very competitive due to the large unemployment rate. After Chang's first several applications to schools in his hometown were declined, he applied for the special teaching post scheme and assigned to a school in Ningxia. 'It was not too bad', commented teacher Chang, 'Yinchuan is only seven hours by train from my hometown and it is after all a capital city, life is good'.

Teacher Feng from School D came from the second largest city in Ningxia (Yinchuan being the largest city). Her parents were both government officials and were able to provide her with 'a happy childhood'. 'When I was five years old, my parents hired a personal tutor to teach me painting. That's when I started to find my passion in painting. He was the best teacher I have ever had...I still remember how fun it was when he took me and other children to the countryside to sketch,' she told me the story with a smile on her face. Teacher Feng got into one of the best art programmes in a prestigious university in the east coast. 'It's not an ITT programme and, to be honest, I never thought I would become a teacher when I was in college', she said to me. Six months prior to graduation, Teacher Feng was able to secure a job position at a large advertising company in Shanghai with an impressive salary figure, which 'was about four times more than what I earn now as a teacher, and I was only a junior designer back then', said Feng.

However, Teacher Feng's working experience in the advertising company was not very enjoyable as she constantly found herself questioning the value of her work as a designer. 'As an art student, I can always be true to my own aesthetics. The freedom of expression, that's what I love about painting', she continued, 'but working as a designer is very different. It's all about what the clients want and what kind of taste they have. To be honest, I really questioned my creative director's taste level, which was very commercial.'

What made Teacher Feng really think about leaving the advertising company was when her boss asked her to participate in client meetings and dinners. 'Almost every evening, even weekends, I had to go to dinner parties with my boss and clients. It's not like I was a prude, but I was only 22 years old back then and some clients' behaviours crossed the line', she told me, 'I told my parents about what happened in the company and they were worried. They told me they would support whatever decision I made'. After given it a serious thought, Teacher Feng quit her job and left the city she loved after working there for three months.

When she was rethinking about her future, she remembered how happy and simple it was to be with her childhood painting tutor. That was when she first started considering the teaching profession, as she described it, 'my parents and I both agreed that schools are a much more simple environment comparing to commercial companies'. Her parents contacted several schools on her behalf and soon she received a job offer from a comprehensive senior secondary school with a strong art units designed for students aiming for university art programmes.

Teacher Fu, despite his unwillingness to be in a teacher education programme, performed fairly well academically and continued his study as a graduate student. Three years later, he completed his study and was awarded a master's degree in history. However, after graduation Teacher Fu realised how difficult it was for a history major to find a job that combined his passion for the subject and good salary. 'At the time, I did not see teaching as the best career choice,' Teacher Fu told me, 'the salary and treatment are just ok. My parents also considered teacher education

programme only as options.’ However, he continued, ‘as a history major, except becoming a teacher, there are no other good career options’. The replacement arrangement of his teacher programme allowed him to have a taste of the teaching job and he found himself enjoying some elements of it: ‘I am really into ancient books and texts. The classical prose we learnt in senior secondary school, I can still remember them. I just really like Chinese literature and history. I think I am suitable to be a teacher. I feel that I am the kind of person...(who) have the intentions to propagate doctrines, to impart knowledge, and to dispel doubts. I want to teach what I know to other people’, said Teacher Fu.

5.2.3. Summary

In Sugrue's (1996) study, a mixed group of student teachers, adolescent and adult, with and without previous occupations, were interviewed. Sugrue's (1996: 162) findings suggest that despite the differences in their age and previous experiences, student teachers' perceptions of and motivations to teach are largely based on ‘non-classroom, and therefore atypical, teaching encounters’. He suggests that one of the crucial steps in the construction of themselves as teachers is the identification with cultural archetypes of teachers or models in their early schooling and learning experiences. One example given by Sugrue (1996: 162-163) is that student teachers usually have pre-perceptions that certain qualities of a teacher are born, such as ‘a teaching personality which is prerequisite for being a teacher’.

In my study, participants such as Teacher Zhou mentioned such encounters which have supported their construction of themselves as teachers. These early identifications with teaching which these early career teachers developed from their observations in an early age, suggests Sugrue (1996: 158), can be enhanced by their family and friends based on culturally embedded images of teachers and teaching.

The influences from my participants' experiences as learners, such as Teacher Ma's experience, also encouraged them to consider teaching as a profession. Wigfield and Eccles' (2000) expectancy-value theory of motivation explores the link between beliefs in ability, the subjective value of the career, and individual expectations of

achievement and success. They argue that ‘thinking you can teach, being told that you can teach and early positive experiences in teacher education and teaching are seen as powerful motivational forces in deciding to teach’ (Ewing and Manuel, 2005, p. 11).

Manuel and Hughes (2006: 10) researched Australian student teachers’ motivation in choosing the teaching profession and identified three dominant interdependent factors that influenced these teachers’ career decisions: ‘intrinsic motivations bound up with a sense of the inner life, the self and the quest for fulfilment and purpose; a desire to sustain an engagement with their chosen subject(s); and the opportunity to work with young people as part of the broader social project of education.’ Their findings coincide largely with what Palmer (1998, cited in Manuel and Hughes, 2006: 10-11) argued that ‘teaching is, at its core, about identity, integrity and seeking connectedness and the call to teach emerges from the ‘inwardness’ of the self, or the ‘heart’, where intellect, emotion and spirit converge.

Studies in the UK and the US also reported that student teachers’ decision in entering teaching were usually based on professional sound reasons such as working with young people, the desire to make a difference to children’s lives and society more broadly, a desire to maintain engagement with a subject area and an expectation of high levels of job satisfaction figure prominently as motivations to choose to teach (see Reid and Caudwell, 1997; Kyriacou and Coulthard, 2000;), even though they were aware of the potential negative aspects of teaching such as poor working conditions and low social status (Reid and Caudwell, 1997).

These factors were also evident in the teacher narratives from my study. However, what seemed to be missing was what some element of what Manuel and Hughes (2006: 11) called ‘social justice dimensions’, for example, statements such as making a difference to children’s lives. Majority of my participants embarked upon teaching because of job market, financial or family pressure. Interestingly, this factor came up later in the interview process in my study as teachers started working intimately with children.

Drawing on data collected from fifteen countries, Blömeke, Suhla, Kaiserb, and Döhrmann's comparative study revealed how demographic background and student social-economic statuses might result in different teacher education outcomes. In my study, teachers' social status was perceived differently by teachers from different background. For teachers like Teacher Zhou or Teacher Chang who grew up in economically less developed suburban or rural environment, the teaching profession was considered to be a viable career choice, which was described by my participants as '*Tie fan wan*' (iron rice bowl) which represented a stable income compared with farmers' income which were usually '*Kao tian chi fan*' (live on the mercy of the forces of the nature). Teachers from urban background, however, aimed differently when they made career choices as teachers' professional treatment and social status were less competitive compared to other city professions such as that of civil servants or businessmen/women.

5.3.Beginning Teaching

Nias (1989) found that majority of her interviewees tended to embark on their teaching career with awareness that monetary recompense might not be as high as other career paths. However, they also consciously expected certain aspects of teaching to be rewarding, such as working with children, based on preconceptions. Many of my participants, on the other hand, considered teaching as somewhat a fallback career. The motive for teaching was linked to choosing teaching for stability or being rejected somewhere else even though teaching may not be the most preferred career path. Therefore, it is interesting to see how these teachers' expectations and motivation evolve when they started teaching.

Nias (1989) explored teachers' lives in depth using Herzberg's (Herzberg et al., 1959) motivation-hygiene theory as she collected data from two sets of interviews with primary school teachers at 10-year intervals. Leithwood and Beatty (2008) point out that what sets Nias' (1989) study different from other quantitative studies is the fact Nias considered teachers as whole persons and endeavored to offer insights into primary school teachers' essential, substantial as well as situated selves.

Herzberg's theory (Herzberg et al., 1959) highlights the two sets of constructs which he termed 'hygiene factors' including environmental factors and 'motivating factors' including more internal factors. He suggests that hygiene factors can cause job dissatisfaction. However, the more motivating factors remain intrinsic to the work itself when there are opportunities for self-actualization (Herzberg et al., 1959; Leithwood and Beatty, 2008). Therefore, the improvement of a hygiene factor as 'dissatisfier' does not allow it to be represented as a 'satisfier'. Conversely, when a job was made more satisfying the level of dissatisfaction was unaffected. Thus, he put forward an argument that the causes of employee's job satisfaction appeared to be largely independent of those of their job dissatisfaction. In terms of management, Herzberg suggests that, in order to promote employee well-being at workplace and to increase motivation, attention should be centred on both satisfiers and dissatisfiers.

Nias (1989) applied Herzberg's theory to study teachers' lives, and found that job dissatisfaction can be caused by factors such as lack of organization and communication, unrepaired teaching equipment, and interference with their classes. Nias suggests that the ability of these hygiene factors to interfere with teachers' motivation and job satisfaction stemmed from their role in compromising the core self, which was strongly identified with success at work. She argues that the dependence of teachers' motivation and job satisfaction on hygiene factors challenges Herzberg's conception of hygiene and motivator factors being independent of each other, which led her questioning the extent to which Herzberg's theory can be applied to teachers' work in school settings (Leithwood and Beatty, 2008).

One criticism of Herzberg's theory comes from Burke (1966) who described the constructs of hygiene and motivating factors and the conclusion of job satisfaction being independent of job dissatisfaction to be an oversimplified representation of issue. His study involving college students' perception of job characteristics in order of importance revealed that motivating and hygiene factors are not uni-dimensional or independent constructs, and in some cases a given factor was found to cause job

satisfaction and job dissatisfaction in the same sample. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2010) point out that, when look at construct and measures of job satisfaction, it is important to take into consideration that different circumstances may be important to different teachers and different teachers may have different interpretations upon similar events or situations.

In an attempt to capture the different variables that influence teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, Dinham and Scott (1998) suggested that the sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction might be categorized into three major aspects: intrinsic rewards of teaching, factors external to the school, and school-based factors. The intrinsic rewards of teaching concern the work itself and the intrinsic motives for becoming a teacher. Examples of factors external to the school given by Dinham and Scott (1988) include imposed educational change, external evaluation of schools, negative portrayal of teachers in the media, and a decrease in the status of teaching. School-based factors, as Dinham and Scott (1988) suggest, include contextual factors such as relations with students, colleagues, parents, and the management and professional culture of schools.

Day et al., (2007) suggest that it is important to look at teacher motivation and job satisfaction from the angle of teachers' sense of professional and personal identity. Maclure's (1993, cited in Day et al, 2005: 103-104) notion of an 'active agential teacher self' which is constantly shaped and reshaped, 'formed and informed' through personal and professional relationships and interactions and through the 'discursive practices', argue Day et al. (2005), challenges Nias' (1989) notion of a substantive self which is a more stable, convergent and coherent construct.

Day et al. (2005) suggest that Giddens' (1991) notion that human agency and social structure as intertwining constructs show case the importance of teacher agency which is mediated by interactions between individual teachers and the macro-, meso-, and micro-structures in which teachers work (Laskey, 2004; cited in Day et al., 2005: 111). As with Lacey (1977), Day et al., (2005) continue to argue that teachers, consciously or unconsciously, adopt strategies to deal with stable or instable,

satisfying or dissatisfying circumstances. Adopting coping strategies, claim Day et al. (2005), might have impact on teachers' sense of identity which would in turn influence their perception of job motivation and fulfillment.

In this section, I attempted to explore teachers' sense of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction which was analyzed the degree to which teachers' varied perception of and mixed feelings towards one common theme in different stages were identified. During phase one and two interviews, participants were asked about what they liked and disliked about their job after a month into teaching. Five common themes, namely, working with children, working with colleagues, conflict with individual principles, responsibilities, workload and recognition, and lastly, employment status and career directions, were identified from teachers' narratives and each of these themes can be a source for satisfaction and dissatisfaction at the same time or at different stages of their teaching as teachers actively making sense of the situations in which they found themselves struggling.

5.3.1. Working with Children

The same with Nias (1989) and many studies cited previously, 'working with children' was mentioned by all of my participants. As Nias (1989) suggests, some aspects of 'working with children' mentioned by my participants can be linked to the affective reward gained by being liked and respected by pupils, while other aspects were related to teaching competence such as classroom management and discipline issues which can be found under the theme 'a sense of competence'. However, in my study, I found it difficult to separate these two themes as they appeared to be interrelated, for example, some teachers were quite open about themselves feeling vulnerable dealing with troubled students or class discipline issues but later gained confidence and satisfaction when they managed to build a close relationship with these students, help them change, and gain their respect.

5.3.1.1 Phase One Interviews

Teacher Feng from School C described herself as a 'troubled student' when she was in school. 'I was considered a rebellious kid', said Teacher Feng, 'I had my first boy

friend in junior high school which was quite a big thing back then'. She continued, 'I decided to be an art major at quite a young age, and you know, at that time only students who performed poorly academically and had no chance of going to universities chose art programmes'. 'I think my high school class director hated me for being so open about going to art programmes as if I set a bad example for other students', Teacher Feng told me, 'therefore, I have always had a bad relationship with her'.

After becoming a teacher, Teacher Feng planned not to be like her old teacher and would try her best to 'make all her pupils feel loved'. 'It should be easier this time,' she said, 'I am teaching the art programme and all the students are planning to study art in the future'. Most of students looked upon Teacher Feng as an idol because of the university and the prestigious art programme she attended and also because of her painting skills. 'Sometimes my students would wait for me after school and show me their new painting. When I gave them some positive feedback you can actually see the sparkles in their eyes', she told me.

However, she soon discovered that not everything turned out as she planned. 'I have in my own class a girl a lot like the old me. She is smart and very talented. But she is also ignorant and thinks that she has the best taste in arts. She had not one but several boyfriends I think. Jus like what I used to be'. Teacher Feng felt frustrated: 'all I want to be is to befriend with her and help her improve, but for some reason she just sees me as her enemy and everything I do is to punish her.'

Teacher Feng felt that she was misunderstood by her student and the attempted communication between them did not achieve the result she wanted: 'this student did not do very well in her other subjects apart from art class. Therefore, I tried to sit down with her and tell her from a practical aspect how important the exam results are for her to get into an excellent art programme. But then she just sees me as the rest of her teachers, not as someone who has experienced all the same thing.'

Teacher Liu from School F taught information technology which was not a key exam subjects. ‘I love how kids come to my class to escape,’ she told me, ‘information technology class did not have regular homework and midterm exams like the other subjects have, so students usually see this 45-minute class as time for relaxation and fun’. She said that she loved how students popped their heads round the computer lab door and asked her if they could use the computer during lunch break. ‘It makes me feel that my lab is a safe place for these kids. Sometimes they do not come to use the computer but to chat with me about their classes and teachers,’ she said, ‘I enjoyed our gossiping moments’.

However, Teacher Liu also encountered moments that she felt frustrated:

‘Once a group of students came to me and told me that they needed to use the computer during lunch break to prepare for their presentations. I trusted them and I told them not to make any changes or install new software to school computers. But later when I dropped by the lab I found that they actually installed The World of Warcraft (a computer game) and the group of them was playing against each other online.’

Teacher Liu told me that later her students confessed it was not the first time they did this and usually they would hide the game files under the file named ‘Student School Work’ so teaching staff would not delete it. ‘I think I just felt a little upset because I thought I was someone they would trust and they would tell me about the computer game’.

Teacher Fu from School D loved to become good friends of his students. He told me: ‘I want to be able to communicate with them from the bottom of my heart. I imagine, sitting on a meadow, we talk about everything, we communicate as equal partners’. However, he also felt what he imagined was only part of the reality as he continued to tell me that, as a subject teacher, he had to teach several classes with around sixty to seventy students in each class. The intimate feeling between him and the students that he wanted was missing because he ‘could not even remember all their names’. ‘In fact, children have their own characters. These children who were born after the 1990s, they have their own ideological problem. Children have children’s nature. If a teacher really becomes equal partners to the students, ‘after you give them your nose,

they want your whole face' (be insatiably greedy). This is very common. After all they are still children', he told me.

Also Teacher Fu felt uncertain about his teaching style. As a student, Teacher Fu had always enjoyed the lecture-style of teaching where a 'knowledgeable' and 'charismatic' teacher, as he described, gave long lectures about a piece of history or explained a piece of ancient literature. However, he found it difficult to motivate students who were not as enthusiastic towards history. 'The best I can do is to ask them not to disturb other student. But teachers need to keep up their prestige. I try to attract their attention using my instruction skills. For example, when I was teaching about Ming and Qing dynasty, I would talk about how Jing Yong incorporated the historical events and background into his novels. Also when I was teaching about the period of the three kingdoms, I would use The Records of Three Kingdoms and The Tale of Three Kingdoms as different versions of the story. Most students do like my teaching, but there are always those who don't, or just don't like history'. Besides the techniques he adopted, he was having second thought about his over-all teaching methodology, especially when he received comments and criticisms from his mentor that he did not seek to engage students.

Apart from some minor classroom management issues, what Teacher Fu felt disappointed the most was a lack of shared interests and topics. When Teacher Fu was in school, he shared his enthusiasm for ancient Chinese literature and history with his class director. But for the young kids he worked with, he felt a lack of passion for knowledge from them. 'If you really talk with them, they won't even be interested in the topic you can talk about. That is the way it is,' Teacher Fu said.

5.3.1.2 Phase Two Interviews

Almost eight months into teaching, Teacher Feng felt that she was making a valuable contribution to her students' future when a lot of her students' parents would arrange meetings with her to make plans for their children. 'I feel that parents appreciate my past experiences,' she told me, 'there will be quite a journey ahead of these kids. The

art programmes are very competitive and expensive, and usually they will need to audition for five to ten different schools to get one offer’.

However, Teacher Feng still had not found a better way to deal with her ‘troubled student’. ‘Sometimes when I told her that her painting skills needed improvement, she would roll her eyes at me and then do nothing to improve’. She then turned to her mentors for help: ‘my mentor told me there would always be some students like her and she told me that I need to do whatever I think is the right thing for her despite her resentful feelings’. Teacher Feng commented: ‘I think this is a very good advice but might not be the only solution. I think this girl is a lot like me that she needs to trust you to learn from you and take your advice’.

Teacher Liu’s story had a quite surprising turn as she took up a new role as assistant class director since the second semester. Used to be just a subject teacher, Teacher Liu was thrilled with the more time she had now to spend with the pupils in her class and the opportunity to build more intimate relationships. ‘Now I know every kid’s name in my class. This is something I do not bother to do with my information technology class because there is no way I could memorize all 600-hundred children’s names in the first grade’, she told me. Even though she only acted as an assistant director, she took on more responsibilities such as delegating and overseeing classroom cleaning duties, making home-calls to parents to arrange teacher-parent meetings. All these new relationships and responsibilities made her feel more important and valuable than simply being a subject teacher.

However, one of her student gave her ‘a big headache’, as she described. ‘I had this boy in my class who acts as the leader of a small gang of three other boys. He sat at the back of the classroom. Other subject teachers constantly complained about them chatting loudly during class and refusing to complete homework,’ she continued, ‘sometimes they just decided to cut school and go play computer games’.

Teacher Liu tried several ways to communicate with this student. ‘I tried firstly talk to them after class in my office. I thought a private environment would promote

mutual trust. He nodded at my criticisms and promised he would behave better,' she said, 'I thought I did a good job'. When another subject teacher told Teacher Liu that this student did not write homework again, she realized that her first attempt failed.

'I later tried criticizing him during class and in front of other students but it seemed to have had the opposite effect because he started to confront me in front of other students too,' said Teacher Liu. 'What bothers me more,' Teacher Liu told me, 'is that sometimes I see him hanging out with older teenagers who do not go to school any more'. The dramatic scene took place in a self-study session when Teacher Liu walked into the classroom finding this student sharing a cigarette with his gang members. 'I was so angry because they were like bullies and the other students were just to afraid to tell them to stop', Teacher Liu said. Teacher Liu threw the pack of cigarettes out of the window and gave them detention.

After school, Teacher Liu was cycling home as usual when she noticed that she was followed for several blocks. 'I was afraid at first because I knew it was him with his friends from outside the school. But then when I saw some older guys playing chess by the road, I immediately stopped and waited them to approach me. When I can see them clearly, I shouted in my loudest voice: 'what do you think you are doing?' they actually laughed at me'. That evening when she returned home, Teacher Liu felt so angry and that she had lost control, she contacted the parents to let them know the situation. However, to her surprise, 'the parents told me that they were not responsible for their son's behaviour at school because, you know, he was in school'.

This was when Teacher Liu realized that the issue with this student's rebellious attitudes and behavior had a deeper root in the environment he grew up in. however, she decided not to report this student's behaviour to the mentoring class director for the reason that 'I think I can help him by helping them to realize that there are people who care about him and will stop him from getting into trouble'.

The next day, Teacher Liu sat down with this student again and had a long chat with him: 'I asked him that did he really think his older friends wanted the best for him? I

told them that they just wanted him to leave school just like them, wondering around the streets and doing nothing. I asked him if that was really what he wanted,' she continued, 'I was really glad when he shaved his head'. Then Teacher Liu made a deal with this student that he should come to her office everyday during the self-study session in the afternoon to complete all his homework with her.

Teacher Liu also persuaded her class director mentor to move this student to the front row of the classroom and she purposefully asked all subject teachers to ask him to speak or answer questions at least once during class. 'It has been several months now since he got into any trouble,' smiled Teacher Liu, 'I would like to think that I helped.

Teacher Fu had one of the most satisfying experiences with his students during the second semester. He also took up a new responsibility as an assistant class director in the new semester. What impressed him the most was the team spirit displayed during his school's annual sports meeting. Teacher Fu was amazed by how his students would cheer each other up during the long-distance race and how students would organize by themselves support group to prepare drinks and food for participating students.

Teacher Fu also remembered what happened during the New Year celebration party. 'At the end of the performance, my whole class told my mentor and me that they thought we were the best. It was extremely touching and I had tears in my eyes,' he told me, 'I don't know if it is because it was the first time I experienced something like this'.

'If you have not been a class director yet, you are not a real teacher.' Teacher Fu told me. He was open about the pleasure it gave him to feel cared for and loved by his students. However, like Teacher Liu, he also experienced his 'headache' moment. Teacher Fu encountered a delicate situation when one parent called him to help stop his daughter's relationship with another older boy in the school. 'One parent called me again and again saying that her daughter started dating. Then her parents caught

her and her boyfriend, who is a boy in eighth grade, in a karaoke place together', Teacher Fu told me, 'they are only in seventh grade; study is what they should be doing. We were all in school once, and kids at this age should be simpler. This is not in western countries where people are more open-minded. It is ok to be friends or to have feelings for someone, but they should not treat relationships as homework and have no time for real study'.

Similar to Teacher Feng, Teacher Fu also felt helpless, 'I haven't solved this problem yet' he said. He also asked his mentor for help, however, 'even my mentor gets a headache when something like this comes up. Sometimes when girls start dating, that is all they can think about, leaving no time for study. If you talk to her, she thinks you are trying to harm her or sabotage her relationship; if you leave it to her parents, there is really nothing they can do and that's why they are calling the teachers. As teachers, we could not just lock the kids in the classroom. My mentor told me sometimes that she was afraid of class with too many girls and now I understand why'.

Teacher Fu still felt emotionally distant from this students in a way that they did not share his passion for history. 'Kids nowadays rarely read history books or traditional Chinese books; they are fond of comic books and internet novels. I am an open-minded teacher, I am not saying that good things will not come from reading those things, but one should at least have the common sense of how many dynasties China has had', said Teacher Fu. Being close to a whole classroom of students also motivated Teacher Fu to reconsider how to promote learning in the history classroom. However, he still felt vulnerable in terms of how to engage 60 students at the same.

5.3.2 Working with Colleagues

Nias' study (1989) reveals that both affective and occupational satisfactions and workplace tensions can be caused by teachers' relationships with their colleagues. She suggests that the fact that teachers put great emphasis on being part of and be

supported by a team shows that sources of professional satisfaction and teachers' professional concerns extend further from classroom alone to school settings.

Huberman (1993) points out that initial reception by the school community is essential to beginning teachers. Nias (1989) takes it further by suggesting that continuing practical and emotional support from colleagues and the school has great self-defining values even in later stages of teachers' career, as showed in her findings. Huberman (1993) and Nias' (1989) study both suggest that majority of teachers responded positively towards their relationships with colleagues. However, tension in the workplace is also visible in cases such as 'jealousy on the part of senior teachers, lack of understanding or indulgence or a divergence of opinion on instructional methods' (Huberman, 1993: 200).

My research participants also spoke highly of their relationships with colleagues, especially with their mentors, which will be discussed in later chapters. Beginning teachers in my study constantly searched for reassurance and competent professional models from head teachers and experienced colleagues. The same as Nias' findings, my participants also considered their colleagues as models, as 'professional parents', who were capable of providing practical and emotional support (1989: 135). At the same time, the self-defining values of being in a community of practice also reinforced their sense of selves as my participants discovered the similarities and differences between themselves and their colleagues in terms of personal and professional values.

5.3.2.1 Phase One Interviews

Teacher Xie from School B was originally from a small county in the south part of the province. Her father, a county secondary school teacher, sent her and her two sisters away to a town school with a very good reputation when she was 12-year old. As the eldest sister, Teacher Xie took up the responsibility to take care of herself and her sisters. 'We usually went home during the weekend and then came back to our rented flat on Sunday afternoons', she told me, 'and gradually you just learn not to

talk to your parents about every problem you encountered. You just become more independent’.

Teacher Xie had only moved to Yinchuan a few months ago for her teaching job. Although she was from the same province, it was the first time she lived in the capital city and she felt like a stranger, especially after being away in another province for college for the past 4 years. ‘It is difficult leaving behind all my good friends from college,’ she told me. Teacher Xie described herself as ‘a little shy and self-reserved’: ‘everyday I walk into the office quietly and just sit there quietly. I usually would not initiate conversation with other teachers unless they talk to me first’. That was when she met another experienced teacher from the office at the other end of the hall.

‘We met briefly at the staff meeting once and we have only exchanged our names. To be honest, I did not even remember his name at first,’ Teacher Xie said, ‘but since then, every morning he sees me in the hallway, even though his office is so far away, he would say good morning to me in a really loud voice.’ ‘Sometimes when we come across each other at the stairs, he would always stop and ask me if I am having a good day and if I have problems with my students,’ she continued, ‘I am very grateful for his gesture. He told me that he has a daughter about the same age as me. And I think he also feels like a father figure to be at this school. In a way he encouraged me to be more outgoing’. Teacher Xie told me that now, after being here for over a month, she would say greetings to other teachers first in the morning.

Teacher Feng from school C felt that she had advantage over other teachers since no other art teachers were graduated from a university that was as prestigious as hers. ‘When other art teachers first heard my university, they would always be amazed,’ Teacher Feng said proudly, ‘other new teachers, sometimes even experienced teachers, would come to me and ask me about my professors at the university and what courses were taught there’. Teacher Feng told me that, at the beginning of the semester, she could not wait to go into the classroom and show students and her colleagues her work and the techniques she was capable of.

Teacher Liu's colleagues from School F, on the other hand, all graduated from the same local university and she felt that everyone was at the same starting point. Teacher Liu described herself as a competitive person. 'I want to be not only a competent teacher but also an outstanding one', she told me. Teacher Liu's school employed a relatively larger group of new teachers this year comparing to other schools. 'It is difficult to stand out from a large crowd,' Teacher Liu said. Being observed by her mentoring teachers and other colleagues, especially department head and principals, was important to Teacher Liu. 'I like to hear that I am doing the right thing during the feedback session. I get the tingly from head to toe when they speak well of my lesson plans and teaching style', she told me.

5.3.2.2 Phase Two Interviews

Over eight months later, Teacher Xie had experienced 'excitement and frustration at the same time', as she described. 'It was the first year the moral education class been transformed into mental health and moral education class,' Teacher Xie told me, 'it is not easy to be the first teacher of mental health as it means there is no teacher in the school who has had the experience to share with me.' Teacher Xie was very excited by the idea of applying what she had learned as a psychology major student into her classroom but she was also at a loss about how to do so effectively. 'I feel frustrated sometimes when I discuss my lesson plans with my mentoring teacher. In a sense we are both new teachers because she used to be a moral education teacher', she continued, 'sometimes I think that the suggestions she gives me only apply to the moral education element of the class and I have a feeling that she thinks what she does or what she did is enough.'

Teacher Xie thoroughly enjoyed her learning experience with other mental health and moral education class teachers from other schools when they attended district-level professional development sessions together. 'It feels good to know there are other teachers who are going through the same difficulties but also sharing the same passion for the subject', she told me.

Teacher Feng told me that she could not stand some of her colleagues during our Phase Two interviews. ‘I think some of them are hypocrites,’ Teacher Feng said. In the second semester, Teacher Feng’s school organized an in-school conference and new teachers were encouraged to present paper based on their self-evaluation in the first semester. ‘I just heard teachers kept talking about how they cared about every child in their classroom. But I knew it was not true for some teachers’, Teacher Feng continued to tell me, ‘sometimes in the office I have heard some of these teachers making fun of some students and sometimes I see teachers treating some students differently only because their parents are government officials. I just do not think they should say things that they do not mean or did not do’.

Teacher Feng did not just express her discomfort with her colleagues’ speech with me. ‘I raised my hand at the Q&A session of the conference. I could see that our deputy principal was hesitant to call my name because I think she sees me as a loose canon. I just stood up and expressed what I felt was important to teachers,’ she told me, ‘honesty, you know.’

Since the conference, Teacher Feng told me she that she had heard people describing her as uptight and vein. ‘My mentoring teacher had a chat with me and told me in private that she thought I was right,’ Teacher Feng said, ‘that was why I enjoy working with her. And I think her comment was right to the point. She told me to judge with good judgement and my own action but not with harsh words and attitude.’

5.3.3 Conflict with Individual Principles

Sahlberg (2010), in arguing that the current practices in Finnish and the wider European context of holding schools and teachers accountable using predetermined standardised knowledge tests and examinations might not be the best way of achieving educational improvement, points out the need to be aware of the multiple values, ethical motives or intrinsic motivations that drive the teaching profession and the individual teachers. Based on her review of the studies and literature in various contexts on the topic of teacher emotional burnout, Chang (2009) suggests that the

values and motives, which are shaped and constantly reshaped by individual, organizational, and inter/intra-personal factors, that individual teachers consciously or unconsciously use to inform judgement and action may lead to positive or negative emotional experiences. Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2011) study on teacher job satisfaction and motivation in Finnish schools suggests that the school climate that is in congruence with teachers' own educational beliefs and values can be considered to be a source for job satisfaction, while negative experiences could be reported when teachers are forced to comply with the rules and values that are in conflict with their own beliefs.

Day and associates' study (2005) on teachers' lives, work and effectiveness supports the findings above and takes it further by utilising longitudinal data to explore the factors that influence teachers' professional identity formation which provided a holistic picture of how macro, meso and micro level contexts, as well as teachers' biographical background and experience phases may have impacted on teachers' perceptions of their work. A number of features are highlighted:

- Macro structures: broad social/cultural features usually referred to in discussions of social diversity and/or government policy, especially in terms of teacher professionalism and curriculum control;
- Meso structures: the social/cultural/organizational formations of schools and teacher education;
- Micro structures: talked of in terms of colleagues, pupils and parents;
- Personal biographies: values, beliefs, ideologies;
- Emotional factors (Day, et al., 2005: 106)

Therefore, Day and associates argue that several level of influences, as listed above, need to be taken into consideration when looking into the conflicting dimensions of teachers' identities, or in Day and associates' terms, the balance and conflicts between the professional, personal and situated selves. Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2011) suggest that the conflict dimensions may be understood using what Rosenberg (1979) termed as contextual consonance or dissonance which refers to the

accordance with or the difference between individual beliefs and those of the population by which they are surrounded. Rosenberg (1977:209) describes the context in which teachers work as ‘a pool or fund of messages’ which teachers, especially those who find themselves holding different values or beliefs, can receive direct or indirect, formal or informal signals which can be used to judge whether each individual’s language or conduct ‘fit’ or not. According to Rosenberg (1979), contextual dissonance or consonance is closely related to job satisfaction as it plays a critical role in shaping individuals’ sense of belongings and also self-esteem. Kristof’s (1996) notion of the compatibility between individuals and organizations is also relevant here as it also suggests that the prevailing norms and values in the school may create obstacles for teachers who hold incompatible goals and values to achieve their own goals and act in accordance with their own values.

The focus in this section, therefore, is not on which educational goals, values and beliefs might be considered appropriate or which educational means and methods might be the best or most proper. Rather, it is interesting to see in what ways the individual teachers in my study felt that their goals and values might be in conflict or in accord with the goals and values appropriated by other colleagues or by the school itself in which they taught.

5.3.3.1 Phase One Interviews

Teacher Feng from School C had a clear picture of the kind of teacher that she disliked and would try her best not to become one. The original model of this dislike teacher was Teacher Feng’s high school class director who was described as impatient and biased. ‘She always picked on me’, Teacher Feng told me. As mentioned before, Teacher Feng experienced a few rebellious years in her high school and, as she recalled, ‘I tended to speak out what was on my mind and I always talked back when I was criticised’. She felt that the reason why her teacher disliked her so much was because of her outspoken nature which was actually one of the characters that Teacher Feng was proud of. Therefore, Teacher Feng decided to make great efforts to respect her students as who they were and to be fair to all her students.

Teacher Feng, not being an enthusiast for mathematics, still believed in all-round development of students. ‘I did not get into a great university art programme solely because of my painting skills,’ she told me, ‘this is one of the things I have tried to get across to my students.’ ‘Having basic knowledge of history, geography, language, maths, sciences, and so on is one of the important qualities of a person’, Teacher Feng suggested. However, she was somehow disappointed by the extreme passion for art exams and the indifference to other subjects displayed by her students. ‘I blame the exam system,’ said Teacher Feng.

Teacher Wang from School E was not a big fan of how her school operated. School E was a newly founded supersize boarding school (with more than 20 classes in each grade) to accommodate students from suburban and rural areas as part of government effort to reduce regional disparity. ‘All these students have to leave home at a quite young age. They have been deprived of a childhood with their family. I am not sure it is such a good idea’, said Teacher Wang. Another issue confused Teacher Wang was the fact that, even though her school was specially designed for students from disadvantaged background, still many students from the city were admitted. ‘These students usually have parents who are government officials or wealthy businessmen’, Teacher Wang continued, ‘they are only here because they failed to get into other city schools and our school has bigger accommodation capacity’.

As an English teacher, Teacher Wang had better understanding of the gap between the quality of English language teaching in urban and rural schools. ‘Language skills are not something that you can catch up in a few days,’ Teacher Wang told me. ‘Some secondary level students from rural areas first came to school without being able to pronounce all 26 letters properly, but some students in the same class who come from the city can already watch American soap operas without subtitles,’ Teacher Wang continued, ‘but now they need to prepare for the university entrance exam with the same level of English test. It is unfair.’

Teacher Fu from School D felt that all he could do was to show sympathy to his students. 'I know that these children work really hard. They have endless homework from the core courses,' Teacher Fu told me, 'but everything is for the exams. I want to discuss historical events with them, but they could not even finish all the homework'. Teacher Fu felt powerless, 'this is what we have been through; we can do nothing about it', he said.

Apart from the exam system, Teacher Fu had more practical concerns. In his student years, Teacher Fu had always had a passion for history and he enjoyed learning historical facts and events through story-telling and reading. As a teacher of history now, Teacher Fu found himself stuck in what he described as 'traditional teaching method of teacher autocracy' as opposed to the 'student-centred' teaching promoted by curriculum guidance and his school. First of all, just graduated with a master's degree in History, Teacher Fu was still adapting to his history classroom full of students who had very limited knowledge of history. Secondly, Teacher Fu did not consider his teaching style to be completely wrong because personally he enjoyed the 'teacher talking and student listening' type of teaching, especially if it was delivered by a 'knowledgeable and charismatic' teacher. Lastly, Teacher Fu was confused how the kind of interactive student-centred teaching could be applied to his classroom which usually had more than sixty students. 'I am still trying to figure my way out. I am trying to figure out what questions to ask, how to interact with students', Teacher Fu told me.

5.3.3.2 Phase Two Interviews

Coming to the second semester, Teacher Feng had an epiphany about her experience with her high school class director. Struggled to get along with a female student, who described by Teacher Feng as 'a lot like herself', Teacher Feng realised that she should not let her teacher take all the blame. 'Unable to take constructive criticism, constant talk back, bad attitude,' said Teacher Feng, 'now I understand why I was always getting on my teacher's nerves'. Still holding to her belief, Teacher Feng promised that she would not give up on her student the way Teacher's Feng's teacher did to her. Nevertheless, Teacher Feng also insisted that all students should be treated

equally disregard their appearances, temperament, and especially, family background, which was why she became really upset with some of her colleagues, who declared to be fair and loving, gave special treatment to students from wealthy or powerful families.

Teaching art in a high school was not as fun as Teacher Feng envisioned either. Teacher Feng still had vivid image of her childhood art tutor taking her to field trips. She admired her tutor for being such as liberal artist and teacher, the freedom of expression as an artist in Teacher Feng's words. However, preparing students for university entrance art examination was a different story. 'It is all about speculating what topics each university examination committee will come up with. There is no fun in that since students need to come up with ideas that are different, not because they are original or creative, but because they could stand out from all the competitors', Teacher Feng commented, 'this is doing art for the wrong reason'. Teacher Feng's dream, or future plan, therefore, was to start an art school where children can actually enjoy painting and employ art teachers just like her childhood tutor. 'Maybe just an small after-class art club as starters,' said Teacher Feng.

Teacher Wang, on the other hand, was busy with her new role as assistant class director. The constant conflicts between students from rural and urban background deepened her concerns with both her students' mental health and the government policy. 'There were cases when students from rural background stealing from city students. Then argument intensified and turned into a group fight.' Teacher Wang told me. How to protect students from rural areas and how to help them grow was considered to be the most important topic on school agenda, as Teacher Wang told me.

In her own English classroom, Teacher Wang actually enjoyed every minute with her students. 'Studying the textbook with my mentor and other colleagues and designing new games or activities for my students is what I really enjoy about my work', Teacher Wang continued, 'but most importantly, I feel really happy when I see students from rural areas, who used to be really shy and self-reserved, volunteer to

give a speech or participate in a activity. It really makes my day’. However, Teacher Wang was worried about what she might turn into when she moved to higher grades. ‘I heard from more experienced teachers teaching junior and senior classes that the fun ends as with the first year’, she said, ‘I heard that as the university entrance exam comes closer, all the focus of teaching will be preparing students for the test and there will be no games or activities, only memorising examination paper from previous years’.

Teacher Fu, as the second semester went to, started to have a grasp of what he could do to achieve the student-centred teaching objectives. Instead of worrying about how to engage every student in his classroom, Teacher Fu tried his best to come up with classroom activities that students could participate after school and present their product in class in turn. ‘I would ask my students to make duplicates of unearthed historical relics, such as Tongche and Quyuanli from Tang Dynasty, and then invite them to pretend to be museum guide tours to introduce the names, the origins, the place of discovery, and the value of these relics,’ Said Teacher Fu, ‘sometimes it is even better to give students some topic to explore by themselves and then present in the class’. However, Teacher Fu was still concerned with how he could better motivate so many students at once. Moreover, ‘one thing is that the students are busy with homework form major subjects’, Teacher Fu told me, ‘and History class needs to be less stressful. As a minor subject, we try not to give children too much homework because we feel empathetic for how much time they spent on their major subject’.

More importantly, Teacher Fu pointed out that now he understood the important of teaching the method of learning history. Teacher Fu continued to explain, ‘now teaching history also means teaching the methods of learning history, for example, from illustrating, knowing, and telling, to summarising, understanding, and concluding, to comparing, discussing and evaluating’.

It is different from the requirement we had when we were in school. Now almost all subjects require similar learning methods to be delivered which aim to help students to be able to solve real life problems rather than just

memorizing facts. However, sometimes I feel that it does not mean that memorizing facts is wrong. I think as Chinese, as an educated person, one should keep some basic common sense, like knowledge of history, in mind and should be able to use it whenever one needs without having to go back to books.

5.3.4. Responsibilities, Workload and Recognition

Day and associates' study (Day, et al, 2005) revealed that majority of teachers had responsibilities outside of the classroom and that school and personal demands intensified as teachers moving into more experienced phases. Their findings are supported by Sturman (2002) who argues that teachers' responsibilities and workload all have impact on the quality of teachers' working life and may add to both physical and emotional stress.

In terms teacher burnout, Gold (1996) argues that unmet personal and professional needs of teachers and negative interpersonal relations with students, parents, and colleagues developed as a result of the multitude of pressures may also contribute to teacher burnout and even attrition.

As Kelchtermans (1993) points out, considerable attention has been paid to the role of teachers' self-efficacy in relation to teachers' motivation beliefs. Whether it is the relationship of personal confidence with the pupils or the fulfilment of implicit professional beliefs, argues kelchtermans, the evaluation of oneself as a teacher may have positive or negative impact on teacher motivation. In educational contexts, Bandura (1997) argues that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs also play a key role in influencing students' learning outcomes as the quality of instruction and the effectiveness of classroom management is closely associated with teachers' confidence in their capabilities which in turn also influence teachers' commitment and enthusiasm.

My participants reported mixed feelings about their work which were complicated by situations such as the ambition in achieving instructional competence, the excitement of taking on new role responsibilities, the frustration of the repetitive aspect of teaching, or the joy of being recognised and praised, which in turn made it difficult

for me to draw a clear line between these concepts. Their sense of competence and satisfaction was greatly enhanced by both external reward and internal satisfaction, or hit by the lack of opportunities and incentives. Despite the similarities in their attitudes towards responsibilities and recognition, there were differences between teachers of different subjects and teachers working in various school contexts.

5.3.4.1 Phase One Interviews

Teacher Zhou was excited to start teaching history and she felt like she had so much to learn. ‘Not only do I need to learn teaching methods and how to deal with classroom situations, I also need to familiarize myself with the textbooks and curriculum requirements very fast’, Teacher Zhou told me. ‘It is not like that because I am a history major graduate, I would automatically know everything about history,’ said Teacher Zhou, ‘it is just as exciting to learn about different historical events now as the first time when I was a student in high school’.

Apart from her own teaching tasks, she immediately noticed the difference between teachers of key exam subjects and herself. ‘As an optional course teacher, I seem to have more time on my hand comparing to key exam subjects teachers,’ Teacher Zhou observed, ‘I teach 5 different classes a week but the lesson content is the same for all these classes. It is easier and of less pressure for me in terms of lesson planning’.

The same with Teacher Zhou, also worked as a history teacher, Teacher Fu constantly compared himself with key exam subject teachers. ‘Our history teachers are relatively relaxed. But we have heavier teaching workload. I have 3 lessons a day each week, except one day that I only have 2 lessons. I teach 7 different classes,’ Teacher Fu told me. However, the downside of being an optional subject teacher was that, as Teacher Fu described, ‘everyday it is repetitions’. ‘Everyday I basically said the same thing over and over and over again,’ Teacher Fu said, ‘lesson preparation is in some way easier’.

Even as a beginning teacher, he was empathetic towards his pupils for being overburdened by the amount of homework from key exam subjects. In a way, Teacher Zhou was also 'jealous' of the attention his pupils given to key exam subjects. 'I know that these children work really hard. They have endless homework from the core courses,' he continued, 'everything is for the exams. I want to discuss history events with them, but they could not even finish all the homework'. 'History is minor subject, the grades are not important. Students don't care about the exams', as Teacher Fu commented.

One of the highlights of Teacher Fu's first couple of months was the municipal-level teaching competition he participated in which he won the first place with the help of his colleagues and students. For Teacher Fu, being selected to take part in the competition was already a great honour. 'Because we competed in our school first, many teachers from different departments participated and the school chose me. It was already a recognition', said Teacher Fu proudly. The school principal assigned mentors and students to help Teacher Fu prepare lesson plans and practice which meant a great deal to him. 'I learnt so much and I opened my eyes. Most importantly I built up my confidence,' Teacher Fu commented, 'some other participating teachers were already very experienced'.

Teacher Liu from School F, while enjoying her more relaxed relationship with her students as a result of being an optional subject teacher, was frustrated by the limited opportunities to shine. Teacher Liu described the 'tingly feeling' of being praised by head of department or principals which she enjoyed so much. However, she was disappointed that she was not selected to compete in a city-wide teaching competition which she considered herself to be a 'well-deserving' contestant. 'I do not think that I fail to be selected because I am incompetent. I think there is more to that. Lots of the awards and opportunities were given to another new teacher who happens to be the niece of our school's director of teaching affairs', Teacher Liu told me.

Both working as teachers of Chinese, Teacher Kang from School C and Teacher Sun from School C both felt the pressure of not having sufficient time to prepare lesson plans and to digest the content of curriculum. As Teacher Sun described, 'I have new lessons to teach everyday which means I only have one night to prepare for it. I would feel upset if I was not able to deliver a lesson as I expected. But on the other hand, I need to let it go because there is a new lesson waiting for me the next day.'

The amount of homework for Chinese lessons required by the school did not make teachers' lives easier either. 'Usually I spend all my evening hours grading homework because I was required to give them written homework at least twice a week. We also have essay homework which takes even longer,' Teacher Sun told me, 'besides that, all my time left is spent on preparing and revising lesson plans'.

Teacher Kang, facing the same pressure as Teacher Sun, also started to notice the delicate relationships between key exam subject teachers and art teachers. The School where Teacher Kang worked had a strong art programme specially designed for students aiming for university art programmes. As a result, art, normally considered being an optional subject in other schools was given special attention in School C, and so were art teachers. 'When I was in high school, it was so common for, for example, my Chinese teacher, to cancel the art lessons and give us Chinese lessons instead,' Teacher Kang observed, 'but in my school, it is quite different. It seems that we have become the optional subjects instead in students' eyes'.

Teacher Xie from School B was excited to take up both the responsibility of teaching mental health and moral education and being the student counsellor. For Teacher Xie, it was a great opportunity to apply what she had learnt as a psychology major in college to practice. Although being a little bit frustrated by the lack of support and guidance in teaching the new unit mental health and moral education, Teacher Xie was excited in exploring by herself to come up with new classroom activities to 'spicy up' the 'old boring moral education lessons', as she put it.

5.3.4.2 Phase Two Interviews

Going into the second semester, Teachers like Teacher Zhou and Teacher Kang were quite comfortable with their responsibilities as subject teachers. Teacher Zhou felt that she still had a lot to learn and her main objective was to become a competent subject teacher first. Teacher Kang also expressed her sense of achievement every time she ‘conquered’ one article in the textbook. ‘Some of the articles in the new textbook are different from what we studied in high school. But even the ones I have learnt before reveal new meanings to me when I prepare lesson plans,’ commented Teacher Kang, ‘It is even stimulating when I watch some expert teachers from schools in Beijing giving demonstration lessons. Sometimes it just amazes me how well they can read between the lines’.

The situation was different for Teacher Fu who suggested that he was a bit frustrated by the repetitive lessons and the content of curriculum which was not as stimulating as he had expected. Not that Teacher Fu was bored of the content of the textbooks, but that, as Teacher Fu described, he preferred lively debates and discussions in the classroom which required much solid knowledge base which his students had not possessed yet. New responsibilities as assistant class director, however, added a colourful dimension to Teacher Fu’s work. As Teacher Fu described:

As I live on campus, so not being a class director means I need to be in the class at 8am when the class starts. But now I have to be in the classroom before 7am to monitor students to perform cleaning-up duties, I need to make sure that no student is late for school, and I need to oversee the morning reading session. Of course I still have some time to my own, after all History is still minor subject so I don’t need to spend a lot of time marking homework.

In a similar situation was Teacher Sun who also took up new responsibilities as assistant classroom director. ‘The biggest change is that I am responsible for the morning reading session which starts usually at seven in the morning,’ Teacher Sun told me, ‘It was worse earlier this year when it was still cold. But now it does not feel so bad getting up early as spring and summer comes’.

Both Teacher Fu and Teacher Sun mentioned more frequent contact with other subject teachers, and more importantly, students as a result of their new role. As an optional subject teacher, Teacher Fu complained about the large number of students he was facing everyday during the phase one interview. The new responsibility, however, brought him closer to the class which he acted as their assistant class director. 'Since I became class director, my roles has changed. I used to be just subject teachers and I took nothing seriously. Now I feel all the kids in my class are my own children and I care more about them', Teacher Fu told me.

The new role responsibility, of course, brought new challenges too. As Teacher Fu commented, 'I feel less relaxed comparing to just being a subject teacher. I could be harsh on students before or tell on them when they do not behave. Now I have to be careful about how I approach their mistakes as I have to be with them all the time'. Besides the similar classroom management issues, Teacher Sun as a key exam subject teacher also encountered other issues. 'You know I used to teach two classes at the same time', Teacher Sun continued, 'but ever since I became the assistant class director of one class, I feel like I can not act as fair as I used to be. I just feel so much closer to those kids in my classroom'.

In semester two, Teacher Liu finally got her chance to shine and she was pleased even though the platform was not as big as she expected. 'I won the first place in the school-wide teaching software design competition,' Teacher Liu told me, 'I know I could have won something too in the municipal level competition'. The lack of professional development opportunities was also one upsetting factor for Teacher Liu due to the large number of new recruits in her school which was a rural school constantly facing teacher shortage issues. 'I heard from my college friend who was teaching now at No.2 Middle school that she had training opportunities,' Teacher Liu continued, 'but here since we have a large group of new teachers, we have to do everything in turn'.

In School B, Teacher Xie was struggling even harder to balance her roles as both mental health and moral education teacher and student counsellor. 'Even though

mental health and moral education is not a key exam subject, a subject teacher is still a teacher,’ Teacher Xie told me, ‘sometimes when I have to be serious in the classroom to deal with some discipline issues, I feel like I am shutting the door to my students who are supposed to see me also as their counsellor’. ‘I tried to put myself in their shoes and I kind of understand it – how can one student open up to me when I just yelled at him a minute ago in the classroom?’ Nevertheless, Teacher Xie saw this dilemma of hers not as barriers but as opportunities to make breakthroughs in her teaching career. Due to the lack of support in her own school as a teacher of a newly designed subject, she was in constant contact with the community of mental health and moral education teachers from other schools and she also went to demonstration lessons or lectures given by experts, sometimes even at her own expenses. ‘Some schools have different staff acting as student counsellors, but this is not what I want,’ Teacher Xie told me, ‘I enjoy teaching very much, but psychology is also my passion. I just need to learn how to balance it’.

5.3.5 Employment status and career directions

Maslow (1968) ranks the need for love and belongingness in the middle of his motivational hierarchy which can only be satisfied when previous basic needs are met and functions as the basis for esteem and self-actualization. By reviewing a broad selection of literature, Baumeister and Leary (1995) also categorize the need to belong as one of the most fundamental human motivation, the connection of which with human cognitive processes, emotional patterns, behavioural responses, and well-being, as they argue, is underappreciated. According to Baumeister and Leary (1965: 500), the need to belong can be perceived as people’s need for relationship or interactions that are marked by ‘stability, affective concern, and continuation into the foreseeable future’.

As discussed in literature review chapter, Teachers’ feeling of belonging to the school where they are teaching has been systematically studied in research on teachers, which is shown to be positively related to both satisfaction and motivation (Breux and Wang, 2003; Lacey (1977)). However, most studies focused primarily on

the relational context of teaching and the collaborative nature of teacher's work (Billington et al., 1998; Duncombe and Armour, 2004).

The findings of this study, while supporting the previous studies in terms of the teachers' awareness and desire for affection and collaboration as revealed in previous sections, also showed teachers' concerns with what Lacey (1977) and McNally et al (2009) term as structural aspect or structural dimension in regard to the perplexing problems of organization structuring and policies which concern teachers. To satisfy the need to belong, as Baumeister and Leary (1995) argue, the person must believe that the interpersonal bond is mutual. This reciprocal feeling can not only be derived from the mutual care between two individuals but also between individuals and organizations. For the participants of my study, the unstable employment status as a result of the special-teaching-position policy was identified as the most concerned factor.

Moreover, earlier researchers such as McLaughlin and Yee (1988) who studied teachers' conceptions of a teaching career in the US laid out two conceptions of career, namely the institutional view and an individual-based view. The first conception defines career in regards to organizational structures and arrangements and considers career in largely external terms of vertical mobility. The second view, however, brings forward the subjective notion of career which is conceived in terms of personal sense of satisfaction, esteem and satisfaction. The important point is that, in order to better understand teachers' perceptions of teaching, it is critical to look beyond the classroom and the craft of teaching by asking their own envision of their career and future development.

5.3.5.1 Phase One Interviews

Teacher Zhou from School E expressed her concerns about what would happen at the end of her three-year special-teaching-position contract. 'I am very nervous about what should I expect,' Teacher Zhou explained, 'I know the contract says that we will be assessed at the end of the third-year and the result of which will determine if

we can continue to work in our school, but it does not specify how we will be assessed'. Also as the first groups of special-teaching-position holders, Teacher Zhou can not turn to her more experienced colleagues for information as she would usually do when she needed help. 'My plan for the next five years is to become a qualified teacher, like my mentor', Teacher Zhou talked about her future plan. 'I like her ways of teaching and doing things, very organized and sophisticated. In ten years? I can not say, it is too far away,' Teacher Zhou smiled.

Teacher Feng from School C, on the other hand, felt more strongly towards the type of contract she had to sign. Teacher Feng studied at one of the most privileged art universities in China and as she pointed out, 'no one in our school has a degree like mine'. 'The reason I chose to work in this school is because I am attracted to the strong art programme,' said Teacher Feng, 'but I feel that I am put on hold here as I will not feel like a real teacher until I sign the contract to be fully-employed'.

Teacher Fu was not satisfied about the low salary and benefits that special-teaching-position provided as he was also envisioning his future not just as a teacher. 'Speaking of reality, people are realistic. I earn about 1000 RMB a month, and I am not formally employed yet. As a guy who just graduated, I am facing a lot of things, like starting a family and having a successful career', Teacher Fu told me, 'the salary is so low. And the problem about employment quota, it makes me feel insecure. I always keep thinking about what would happen after these 3 years'.

Winning the city-wide teaching competition was a confidence-booster for Teacher Fu. One of the judges of the competition, a history professor from the local university, approached Teacher Fu and expressed his encouragement for Teacher Fu to become a PhD student. 'Of course, I will if I have the chance, but one needs to take their time on the journey', explained Teacher Fu, 'life should have a purpose, but also need accumulation. 'I actually enjoy teaching, not huge pressure, relatively relaxing. Although teaching is repetitive, although there are a lot of classes to teach, I still think I am bringing my advantages into play which is my knowledge scope. And I

really enjoy teaching and communicating’, He commented, ‘if the school could improve our treatment’.

5.3.5.2 Phase Two Interviews

Teacher Zhou did not talk about her employment status much in the second interview and she had her reasons. ‘I think it is best to concentrate on my work at hand,’ said Teacher Zhou, ‘I think sometimes I am better off without the pressure of constantly worrying about things that I can not control’. Her plan for the next five years did not change. ‘I hope that, in three years, I will become fully-employed; and maybe in five years, I will try my best to become an expert, or at least a recognized history teacher’, Teacher Zhou told me about her plan for the next few years.

Teacher Feng told me about a frustrating experience of being rejected to participate in a art class teaching competition because of her employment status. ‘When I got the news I was so excited. My colleague and I went to sign up for the competition immediately. But then we were informed that, because there were too many participants, they decided to only allow formally-employed teachers participate’, Teacher Feng commented, ‘It was very disappointing’. ‘I just feel like that school is responsible for all these, even though I know it is not the school’s fault’, said Teacher Feng.

When asked about her future plan, Teacher Feng portrayed me a picture of some children she was tutoring and herself sitting in the countryside and observing the sunset, a recurring image of her childhood art tutor. ‘I want to start my own art-class,’ described Teacher Feng, ‘it would not be for examination purposes. It would be to nurture children’s love for painting and ability to appreciate’. Teacher Feng was the only teacher who did not mention ‘becoming a qualified or expert teacher’ in her five year plan.

Teacher Fu gave special-teaching-position a serious thought and considered it to be unfair. ‘I feel I am in an unfavourable position’, he said, ‘I spent four years on my undergraduate study, and another three years on my master’s degree. Altogether it is

seven years. And being a special-teaching-post holder means another three years before becoming a formally employed teacher. So I spent 10 years to explore without social benefit like house benefit, medical care and pension which is the basic right that should be guaranteed by the government to its citizens’.

...a few days ago, the weather changed and I got caught a cold, so I went to the hospital. Another teacher who is formally employed was also there and all his expenses were covered by employee medical care but I have to pay for it myself. It is not that I am too cheap to buy medicine, but if you do not have to pay for it yourself, why should you? Moreover, if I get sick in the future, something serious, there will be nothing there to cover my expenses.

Over and over again, Teacher Fu expressed his desire to continue to be a teacher because he felt that teaching ‘suited’ him and he was ‘suitable’ for teaching. Teacher Fu also showed his understanding towards the school as he knew that the authorised number of teaching staff was regulated by the government and was out of the control of the his school. However, as he commented, ‘talking about exhaustion, I am fine with it. I am ok with forty classes a week if I have to. But I do not like to live feeling insecure. I will just do what I do now and if better opportunities come up I am out of here’.

5.4. Summary and Discussion

Findings of this study are supported by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) to the extent that the major motivating and de-motivating factors identified by the participants fall into the category of employee’s physiological needs, safety and belonging needs, and esteem needs. Teachers’ personal principles and future plans can be considered to be associated with their self-actualisation needs which are at the highest level of Maslow’s Hierarchy. However, whether these factors can be strictly categorised into the rigid cycle of needs as Maslow argued is questionable, which is supported by Arnold, Cooper and Roberson’s (1995) argument that needs do not always group up or function in the same way Maslow predicted. And most importantly, they point out that Maslow’s theory does not explain why particular needs would be more important to certain individuals while being less critical for others.

The same issue also exists when connecting the findings with Herzberg and associates' (1966) two dimensional paradigms of factors and Nias' (1989) categorization of 'satisfier and dis-satisfier'. Both writers are right in arguing that factors contributing to job satisfaction and those contributing to dissatisfaction are largely independent. The findings of this study show that, for example, support/encouragement by principals or management may be considered to be a source of satisfaction or motivation, but the absence of explicit encouragement are not perceived to be a source of dissatisfaction. On the other hand, close relationship with pupils may be regarded as a significant source of meeting teachers' needs for affection; it can also become a source of pressure and dissatisfaction due to behaviour problems. Even though these findings confirm Herzberg and associates (1959) and Nias' (1989) conclusions, that the causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction are generally independent, but not possibly to the degree concluded by these writers. It also fails, same with Maslow's theory, to answer the question of why certain needs are perceived to be more important by certain individuals.

Therefore, determining which responses fall into which classification is not easy, as mentioned earlier, even with the help of definitions given by previous researchers such as Nias (1989). The intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic categorization of motivation, argue Scott et al (2012), also has its issues. For example, workload would be considered as both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, as it is an inherent task for all employees constantly facing external or structural changes. Lortie (1975), Dinham and Scott (1998), and Scott et al (2012) propose to add a domain of school-based factors to the above categorization to explain the variance between different experiences reported from different school which further complicates the situation.

The findings of my study align more closely with Fuller's instrument, the 'Teacher Concerns Statement', which focuses on the concerns of beginning teachers. Her work included the identification of a three-stage process regarding beginning teachers' concerns: concerns with the 'self', concerns with the 'self' as teacher, and later concerns with impact of teaching on children learning (Fuller, 1970)

Fuller (1970) argues that these specific concerns may be private, public, incongruent or unconscious, depending on the person and the circumstances. Fuller's model gives special attention to beginning teachers' experiences as she observes that, at the very beginning of their career, it is difficult to visualise the tasks and challenges and therefore more attention would be given to themselves. My participants' stories of how and why they decided to enter teaching training support this argument in a sense that they were primarily concerned with whether or not they could see themselves as teachers in relation to their career aspirations, family expectations, and restraints such as financial or academic limitations. After the first contact with teaching and the teaching task intensifies, beginning teachers started to concern about their ability to survive in the new school and to obtain adequate competence to achieve what they were required or expected to do. Therefore, the second phase of concerns with 'self as teacher' emerge. This argument is consistent with the findings of my research which also suggest that beginning new teachers were primarily occupied with survival concerns over their ability to adapt to daily teaching routines and to coordinate relationship with students and colleagues with confidence. Concerns with pupils, especially with teachers' impact on children learning, come later when beginning teachers overcome the reality shock and survival concerns.

Conway and Clark (2003) point out that Fuller's sequential and hierarchical stages, similar to Maslow's hierarchical of needs, might possess the same weakness that some teachers do not experience the same journey from concerns about self to task to impact. Even though my participants would focus more on instructional and classroom management skills or lesson planning and understanding of curriculum, they tended to discuss these problematic issues in relation to their personal characteristics and individual principles as a way of reflecting on or validating their ways of thinking. Beginning teachers in my study also demonstrated an awareness of individual students' learning needs and the impact of their behaviour and teaching on the students despite the fact that they often found it difficult to attend to these issues for practical constraints such as classroom size. Moreover, Conway and Clark (2003) also argue that, since there is no information given by Fuller (1970) on the duration

of specific stages of concerns, this model is of limited use in guiding teacher education and training as it might cause to disrupt beginning teachers' development.

Nevertheless, what I find Fuller's three stages of concerns helpful is the fact that it gives proper attention to the factor of 'self' which allow room for individual differences to be appreciated rather than de-personalised by separated satisfier or dissatisfiers. The criticism for Fuller's work above on its universal shift in attention should not overshadow its capacity to relate to individual experiences. It was observed that the concept of the 'self' permeated the interview transcripts of my study in relation to both personal and professional issues. As a matter of fact, it would be difficult to divorce personal self from professional self as most beginning teachers' narratives revealed. Fuller (1969) refers to teachers' concerns as the perceived problems of teachers or issues teachers 'think about frequently and would like to do something about'. This definition of 'concerns', according to Schon (1987: 74), can be regarded as an opportunity to highlight beginning teachers' own initiatives in reflecting upon both positive and negative aspects of their experiences as he suggests that 'little thought is expended in reflection' if plans proceed smoothly while hypothesize, analysis and reflection take place when the unexpected happens.

Moreover, findings of my research also echoes Fuller's progressing stages of concerns in a sense that what my participants found positive or negative, motivating or demotivating, were associated with the contextual dynamics of their work place such as student demographics or collegial relations as well as how individual teachers made sense of their experiences with reference to their early learning experiences as students and their individual principles. The participating beginning teachers, as Zeichner and Tabachnick (1985) describe, were not passively awaiting inscription.

Chapter 6 Self-Image

6.1. Overview

Kelchtermans (1993: 449) defines self-image as ‘the global characterisation of oneself as is revealed in self-descriptive statement’ which is considered to be one of the descriptive component of the professional self, based on his research on Belgian school teachers’ career stories (Kelchtermans, 1993; Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe, 1994) in which he collected teachers’ answers to the question ‘who am I as a teacher’ with references to their general self-descriptions.

According to Kelchtermans (1993), the analysis of self-image is important for the reason that it is closely connected to the self-esteem of teachers which refers to the evaluation of oneself as a teacher in comparison with self-expectation and others, or an indication of a self-image/ideal self-image ratio as termed by Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994: 55). Self-image also serves as a wider platform for teachers to balance the self-description, the professional norms and principles of the profession, the real-life work situations, and judgement by others.

What’s more, Kelchtermans (1993) emphasizes the fact that the self-image as a teacher is often associated with self-description which goes beyond solely professional principles and behaviour. Other studies also note the close relationship between the personal and the professional in teacher’s work (Day, Kington, and Gu, 2005; McNally, 2006). Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) point out that, in looking at teachers’ professional development, it is critical to take into consideration two aspects of personal and professional development. Firstly, previous experiences such as interactions with teachers as a student, childhood experiences of schooling and relationship with parents might have impact on beginning teachers as various ideas and images of teaching might have formed before they start working (Calderhead, 1992; Knowles and Presswood, 1994). Secondly, Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) lay stress on teachers’ personalities as an important aspect in shaping teachers’ professional selves for the reason that the tasks of classroom teaching and interaction with pupils intrinsically involve teachers’ personalities.

What Kelchtermans (1993) and Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) have suggested has three implications. First of all, it shows that the self-image as a metaphoric way of thinking about teaching can be a useful tool for studying the nature of teaching and what teachers think. Secondly, the self-knowledge or self-awareness of oneself and the personal qualities might be crucial for teachers to evaluate their own perceptions and behaviours, and to respond to judgement from others. Thirdly, in accessing to the knowledge of the self through self-imaging, beginning teachers face the challenges of negotiating a role between the ideal and reality within both familiar and new contexts (Kelchtermans, 1993).

Therefore, Calderhead and Shorrock (1999) point out that beginning teachers are not only students of teaching but also students who are responsible for their own personal and professional development. In doing so, it requires systematic ways of gathering and acquiring knowledge of the self. Holstein and Gubrium (2000) suggest that the self is always built up upon narrative resources available for self construction. In addressing new teachers' formation of ideals and expectations, Sarason (1999) argues that metaphors and words that are derived from resources for self construction which embody experiences and beliefs could serve as the link between the known and the unknown, the familiar and the new.

This is based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) notion that human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and most concepts are partially understood in relation to other concepts. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 56-57), metaphors are fundamental to human thinking because it produces coherence and sense-making mechanisms for human who are born into an established system of cultural presuppositions. Thus, studying metaphors and images that human create allow social and cultural assumptions, values, norms to be explored, especially for comparison between individuals, institutions, and cultures. As a result of the implicit nature of conceptual system, language and linguistic expressions become, argued by Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 6), a possible source of evidence for recording what that system is like.

This assumption is in line with the discourse and poststructuralist theories of subject position which refers to the cultural, historical, social, situated and discursive identity categories, which can be defined as a point or a position that individuals can identify with or reject (Sørensen, 2007). According to Davis and Harre (2001), what is more important is how individuals interpret and utilize these available positions which incorporate established images, expectations and values since ‘there is a structure of rights for those that use that repertoire’ (262). Hence, these positions become important resources for self construction as they provide the outline of images or metaphors with distinctive characteristics.

Sørensen (2007) utilizes the concept of subject positions and identity construction to study Norwegian teachers’ professional identity construction. Sørensen (2007) suggests that individuals are not passive in the process of borrowing and evaluating existing subject positions. The construction of professional identity, therefore, can be understood as a process of narrative positioning on the individuals’ part to agree with or reject the available resources. Moreover, Sørensen (2007) also points out that, although subject positions and resources for identity constructions are based on real and concrete practices, statements, and assumptions, these images or metaphors are in flux and will change with time and contexts. Therefore, narrative construction of teacher identity provides an opportunity to activate the actual positioning that is situated and specific.

For example, based on her analysis of Norwegian curriculum policy, Sørensen (2007) concluded three major subject positions, namely parent-centred, cooperation centred and curriculum oriented, that are presented to teachers which serve as an important narrative resources for teachers in talking about their work. She also developed categories of teacher identity, such as the cooperating and open minded teacher and the developing and changing teacher, based on how teachers talk about their day-to-day practice with reference to teaching style and methods.

The above analysis that reveals the interaction of individuals and contexts is broadly in accordance with the existing theoretical accounts of the construction of the self. According to Blumer (1969), the symbolic interactionist approach to the construction of the self has three premises. Firstly, he regards the most important aspect of self construction is not the independent or transcendent source but what individuals find meaningful. Secondly, Blumer (1969) also draws from Mead's (1934) view that the self is an integral component of social interaction and can not exist independently. Thirdly, as he argues (1969: 2), 'meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters'. Holstein and Gubrium (2000) point out that the third premise also serves as a warning for using overly structured methods which disallow the interpretive process to be shown through.

The active poisoning process conducted by individuals, as mentioned by Sørensen (2007), is also consistent with Goffman's (1959) analysis of self-presentation. According to Goffman, the self does not present itself solely based on the individuals, 'but from the whole scene of his action' (252). He utilizes concepts of theatre performance, such as performer and character, to highlight the process of actors taking account of the scripts, scenes, settings and stages in developing one's sense of character or self in this context. Hence, Holstein and Gubrium (2000: 36) point out that it is worth noticing Goffman's emphasis on individuals' effort that is 'put into its accountable production'. Moreover, Goffman also conceptualizes the improvised self which implies that self is not only 'social and empirical' but also 'circumstantially realized' in a sense that individuals may possess multiple selves for the purposes of daily living (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000: 37).

Holstein and Gubrium's (2000) make use of Blumer and Goffman's notion of self construction and develop the conception of the three caveats for the construction of the self. According to them, firstly, local cultures supply multi-faceted resources which can be mediated by individuals as they encounter complex situations. Therefore, local cultures, as important as it maybe, do not automatically determine how selves are constructed. Secondly, organizational embeddedness needs to be

taken into consideration as it emphasizes the location and the circumstances in which individual interpretation and adaptation occur. Thirdly, they stress the multiple layers of interpretive process and the unstable nature of social context which may cause a vast array of possibilities.

The above theorization of the construction of self and the resources of self construction also have two important implications. First of all, it supports the process of studying teachers' self-images as a way of giving access to individual teachers' understandings of the context in which they live in and the values and beliefs that they prefer or reject. As Davies and Harre (2001), it is helpful for the reason that it considers individuals as active agents of their own lives who are responsible for the dynamic and complex process of identity construction.

Secondly, it helps researchers to focus on the social interactions, the contexts and the communities in which metaphors or images are produced, sustained, shared, and reshaped. For example, Calderhead and Shorrock (1999) argue that to be a new teachers who want to fit into many school setting means buying into these or related metaphors. However, the process of fitting-in is not always easy and pain-free. On the other hand, S  reide (2007), in acknowledging the active agency of the individuals, also emphasizes the power of institutionally produced narrative identities in legitimizing their existence on individuals' sense of selves.

In summary, the self-image of teachers reflects upon what each individual feels about themselves. Each storyteller has their own theory of teaching and the proposed best way to teach. They each have their own way of forming special relationships with their pupils and they have impressions from their past experience on what works best in forming these relationships. This chapter, therefore, attempts to illustrate beginning teachers' self-images based on the responses collected during the interviews to the questions such as how do you perceive yourself as teachers (See Appendix 6: Interview Schedule).

6.2. Beginning Teachers' Self-Images

6.2.1 Early Experiences

Lortie (1975) uses the term 'the apprenticeship of observation' to refer to the perceptions and images of teaching that student teachers gained by observing and evaluating their childhood teachers in action prior to participating in their own teacher training courses. Goodson (1992) argues that, in some cases, teachers' own experiences as pupils are considered even more important than the teacher training periods. Knowles (1992) takes up this view and argues that 'understanding the origins of student teacher perspectives is largely a product of understanding the impact of biography – those experiences that have directly influenced an individual's thinking about teaching and schools' (102).

In an attempt to develop a model for studying teachers' biographies, Knowles (1992) conducted an explorative ethnographic case study with Canadian pre-service teachers by collecting teachers' journals, and conducting weekly unstructured interviews and observations. Based on his findings, he identifies four major components of teacher role identity, including childhood experiences, teacher role models, teaching experiences, and significant or important people and experiences other than very early formative experiences.

My study provides evidence that are congruent with Knowles' (1992) findings. Firstly, as Knowles' participants, beginning teachers in my study also considered university experience and teacher training courses to be of less impact upon teachers' perceptions of teaching.

Secondly, Knowles (1992) reports two type of beginning teachers, one type with strong role-identities, who have firm views of teaching and how they would like to present themselves, and the other with weak role-identities and with no clear image of him/herself as a teacher. However, having a strong conception of role-identities or a strong self-image as teachers or not, beginning teachers tend to teach in the manner in which they were taught or were considered as normal or required. Participating teachers in my study, different from Knowles' participants, all revealed relatively

strong role-identity in terms of what kind of teachers they expected themselves to become, especially during the Phase one interviews. The reason for the difference might be cultural in relation to beginning teachers' belief that the image of a teacher should be consistent in and out of the classrooms and schools. Therefore, 'Wei ren shi biao' (be worthy of the name of the teacher and be a role model in all aspects as a human-being) and 'Yan chuan shen jiao' (teach by words and imparting knowledge as well as setting up examples by one's own deeds), as the two terms that were most frequently used by my participants might suggest, the image of themselves as teachers should, as all my participants believed, naturally reflect how they see themselves as individuals and the personal qualities that they possess. Interestingly, in British settings, Nias (1989) observed that more experienced teachers tend to incorporate professional identities into their self-image as persons for the reason that teaching is the type of occupation where the person can not be easily separated from the craft.

These pre-conceptions of teaching, suggests Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1987: 161), are able to provide with beginning teachers 'folkways of teaching' which set aside what Tomlinson (1999) refers to as 'default options', that is a self of observed and evaluated beliefs and strategies that produce safe and familiar results. Lortie (1975) points out that one of the consequences of the apprenticeship of observation is that, unlike beginners of other professions such as medical or law professionals, teachers are less likely to be aware of the limitations of their knowledge in terms of the craft of teaching when they first start. Lortie (1975) explains that, as apprentices of observation, students can observe behaviours of teachers in action at the foreground. However, they rarely have the opportunity to see the background of teachers' performance, which includes the planning, preparations, post-mortem analysis, and pedagogical negotiations that are crucial to teacher's work.

Therefore, Beijaard et al.'s (2004) conception of professional identity formation as an ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation is useful here in explaining the challenges faced by beginning teachers in my study which involve negotiating a role within new and unfamiliar contexts. In this case, the limited impact of

university/teacher training courses on beginning teachers might be problematic for the reason that beginning teachers would enter the profession without analysing their default models of teaching which can lead to teachers teaching in the same manner as they were taught or they considered to be normal (Lortie, 1975).

By presenting images or metaphors of teachers which represent embodied experiences, this section focuses on the powerful but limited understandings of teaching that beginning teachers possessed at the very beginning of their careers. It also attempts to show the struggle and negotiation of role identities, as well as evolving or changing attitudes and beliefs of these new teachers in relation to their earlier perceptions as they gained more experiences in the workplace.

6.2.1.1 Phase One Interviews

Teacher Fu from School D missed his high school years, especially his high school class director and his classmates. ‘I remember this clearly, we were a ‘supervision-free’ classroom. We didn’t have teachers monitoring our exams’, Teacher Fu told me, ‘and my classmates were fond of learning and very self-controlled. Our class director trusted us which made us even more self-controlled’. Teacher Fu was impressed by his class director’s management style which was considered by him to be trusting and encouraging, and not the oppressive management style. He described his high school class director as life-changing: ‘In some way he rescued me. He changed me from a child who was naughty, trouble-making, overactive child to a child who wanted to study, and to make progress. Because he encouraged me and he recognized all my achievements’.

Therefore, sharing common interests with students or recognizing students’ talents was very important for Teacher Fu. ‘When I was in junior middle school, my grades were ok but not outstanding. I was a little rebellion, and I liked to go against the teachers’, Teacher Fu continued, ‘after I was in senior secondary school, my class director thought highly of me. Because he knew I was very interested in literature and history, so as a teacher of Chinese, he encouraged me to speak in the class, guiding me to be interested in studying’.

As a beginning teacher, the kind of relationship he had with his class director still had impact on Teacher Fu. 'I want to be able to communicate with my students from the bottom of my heart', Teacher Fu told me, 'and I imagine, sitting on a meadow, we talk about everything, we communicate as equal partners'. In the classroom, Teacher Fu also expected the same passion for the subject as he did in high school: 'I want to be the kind of teacher who can light up the classroom and have lively discussions with students. I like students to ask questions, to raise different opinions, to debate'.

However, the large classroom size stood in the way of Teacher Fu's ambition to establish the kind of professional relationship he expected. 'Rarely could I be friends with students. I teach 7 classes, about 400 students. I could not even remember all their names', He continued, 'on the other hand, these children who were born after the 1990s have their own ideological problems'. He explained: 'If a teacher really becomes equal partners to the students, 'after you give them your nose, they want your whole face' (be insatiably greedy). This is very common. After all they are still children. Plus, if you really talk with them, they won't even be interested in the topic we can talk about. Middle school students have limited amount of knowledge about history, and they are not paying enough attention to history'.

Acting and behaving like a teacher was very important to Teacher Fu. At a young age, Teacher Fu was taught by his parents to learn the basic qualities of being a man which were being honest and trustworthy. He also deeply believed that teachers should set examples by their own conduct and he still remembered a counter-example from his childhood: 'when I was in junior secondary school, there was this teacher who had questionable life style. He smoked, drank and gambled. He also had family problem, and he used dirty words a lot. At that time we despised that teacher. But no big negative influence on us. Because we knew it was bad, so we would go that way'. 'If a teacher has bad habits, or personality defects, and if a sensitive child realizes, these things definitely will have influence on this child', Teacher Fu commented. 'I am a man with principles, such as treat people the way you want to be

treated. People should have self-awareness, they should be aware of their advantages and shortcomings. I try to be a man with good will. But of course I have shortcomings, sometimes I am lack of patience, and I give up too soon’.

Same with Teacher Fu, Teacher Feng also had clear likes and dislikes about her childhood teachers. Her childhood private art tutor was the ideal image teacher for her. Until today, she still remembered the feeling of happiness and relaxation when her tutor took her on sketching trips. The freedom she had back then in painting what she liked and appreciated had great influence on Teacher Feng. During her brief work experience in an advertising company, she described her creative director as having a commercial taste and she disliked the fact she had to respect clients’ wishes and could not express her ideas as an artist.

Teacher Feng also had a clear idea of what kind of teacher she would never become, which was her high school class director. Teacher Feng felt she was picked on by her high school class director all the time because Teacher Feng’s rebellious behaviour was considered to be having a bad influence on her fellow classmates. Teacher Feng also believed that her class director’s bias against her is also rooted in her explicit determination to study art and hence the less attention paid to other key exam subjects. ‘I am going to be the kind of teacher who respects the student for who she is’, Teacher Feng said. ‘(I want to) make all my pupils feel loved...it should be easier this time,’ she told me, ‘I am teaching the art programme and all the students are planning to study art in the future (like me)’.

Teacher Ma taught music in School A. Since she was a little girl, she had been described as outgoing and musical. Her parents, a civil servant and a school teacher, were very supportive in Teacher Ma’s pursuit of her love for music and dancing. ‘I have always been the favourite of my music teachers when I was in primary and secondary schools,’ Teacher Ma told me, ‘whenever we needed to put on a performance for the school, I would always be the lead singer or dancer’. At the beginning of her high school years, considering Teacher Ma’s passion for music and her other subject grades were just average, her parents decided that it would be the

best for her to concentrate on and aim for the university music major. Since then, she was sent to famous piano teachers and singing teachers from Ningxia University to prepare for the university entrance exams and music auditions.

‘At that time my family lived in Wuzhong city. Every Saturday my parents would take me to Yinchuan city for my music lessons. I remember I was always so sleepy because we had to get up at six in the morning and spend two hours on the coach to Yinchuan. Then we would stay at my uncle for one night and go to singing lessons on Sundays’, Teacher Ma continued, ‘I am really grateful for what my parents had done for me. Not all parents would sacrifice so much of their time and energy, you know’.

Teacher Ma really respected her piano and singing teachers. ‘They always dressed proper and tasteful. Their home decorations were very classy. Artistic and tasteful, I think they were exactly what music teachers should be’, Teacher Ma commented. Teacher Ma also admired her music teachers’ sense of confidence. ‘They were very outgoing and friendly which made me feel relaxed. They were always very confident when commenting on my performance. I like that they were straightforward and never shy because I am not a shy person either’.

Teacher Ma successfully enrolled in Ningxia University as a music education student after graduating from high school. As a music education major, Teacher Ma had three core subjects including music theories, music performance (musical instrument, dancing and singing) and music education theories. ‘I was never good at theories. I always just got by at musicology exams’, Teacher Ma told me, ‘but I always got high scores for my performance. I still remember that the feedback I received from my tutors was always that I was very strong at artistic expression and acting but technically and theoretically weak’.

As a music teacher, Teacher Ma hoped to present herself just as who she was, ‘an outgoing and friendly teacher with a sense of fashion and a lot of energy’. ‘Teaching music to students as an optional course is very different from teaching music major

students,’ Teacher Ma observed, ‘I want to show my students that learning music can help us improve our taste level and transform us into more confident individuals’. Knowledge of modern musicians and pop culture was considered to be an advantage by Teacher Ma comparing to the elder music teachers in her school. ‘I think for students who do not want to be music major, it is even more important to motivate them to be interested, not necessarily in learning how to play instruments or write music but to appreciate and understand music pieces’, Teacher Ma said, ‘so I think I will incorporate a lot of pop music or rock music that my students love so much as they are also forms of art that should be appreciated’.

6.2.1.2 Phase Two Interviews

Coming to the second semester, Teacher Fu’s notion of ‘friendly’ relationship with his students was changed by his new responsibility as the assistant class director. ‘Since I became the class director, I feel like a male nanny’, Teacher Fu told me, ‘you know we are men and we like to be straightforward and we do not like to nag. But with these kids, nagging works. Otherwise, they hear what you say with one ear and it immediately fly out from the other ear. Now I nag a lot’.

The constant attention required from a class director to all aspects of school life had transformed Teacher Fu’s perception of teachers’ work, especially in comparison to just being a subject teacher. ‘Even though I am only old enough to be their big brother, I feel like I am their parent’, Teacher Fu said, ‘there are always plenty of things for me to worry about. Unlike when I was a subject teacher, I do not invest so much mentally...I also feel much closer with these kids. For example, after exams, I feel proud and a sense of achievement if my kids do well. If other subject teachers come to tell me that one of my kids behaves badly in their class, I will not be very happy and even a little bit protective’.

However, comparing to his mentoring teacher, his classroom management style was still relatively ‘soft’ as he described:

my mentor is the kind of class director who is very strict. She has made very strict classroom rules such as specific punishment like corporal punishment,

more homework or informing parents for being late, chatting during class, or being unable to finish homework. Students are scared of her. Once she establishes her authority, it becomes much easier to manage student behaviours. Also she teaches Chinese which is a major subject, so parents and students pay more attention. I could not be that tough yet, I am sometimes very soft. If students make mistakes, I usually do not punish them, instead I would just talk to them and help them see what is it that they do wrong. But sometimes students are not grateful for my softness; they would just make the same mistakes over and over again. Moreover, it is history class again, one class per week tops, so students do not pay enough attention and they do not really care about the grades.

In terms of motivating students to learn, Teacher Fu still had doubts. When describing himself as a learner, he told me: ‘it is not that I had great learning techniques; I just like reading very much. I like all kinds of history books and I guess everything connects when you read a lot. But kids nowadays rarely read history books or traditional Chinese books; they are fond of comic books and internet novels. I am an open-minded teacher, I am not saying that good things will not come from reading those things, but one should at least have the common sense of how many dynasties China has had’.

In the second semester, Teacher Feng, to her surprise, had more respect for the high school class director whom she disliked so much as a result of having a student who was a lot like Teacher Feng when she was a student. By communicating with her mentor, she decided that sometimes it was for the best to do what the teacher considered to be beneficial for the students, despite the fact students might not be able to understand. When Teacher Feng’s attempt to encourage this student to focus more on academic and to stay away from young people who do not go to school failed, she had the first-hand experience of the frustration that her high school class director might have experienced before.

‘Getting into a university art programme is very difficult,’ Teacher Feng told me, ‘you need to prepare for examination according to the university you are applying and also the potential judges. So there are actually a lot of test-taking techniques and human relationships to deal with’. ‘It is not just teaching art anymore. It is all about speculating what topics each university examination committee will come up with.

There is no fun in that since students need to come up with ideas that are different, not because they are original or creative, but because they could stand out from all the competitors’, Teacher Feng commented, ‘this is doing art for the wrong reason’. Therefore, Teacher Feng still held on to the hope to recreate the harmonious picture of her and her tutor painting the sunset in the countryside.

By the time the second interview was conducted, Teacher Ma had had a lot of different experiences. ‘Teaching music is hard’, Teacher Ma commented, ‘I have always loved listening to music and singing along so it is difficult for me to understand why some students would not be interested at all.’ Teacher Ma found it especially challenging to engage students in discussing and analysing a piece of music. ‘Sometimes my students are very excited when I play an English pop song for them. But when I ask them to tell me how they understand the lyrics or what composing techniques they could identify, they would lose interest completely’, Teacher Ma told me, ‘so often my music lesson becomes a music concert and audience just leave after the show’.

Having to compete with key exam subject teachers was another unpleasant experience for Teacher Ma. ‘When I was in high school, our maths or English teacher could just walk in before a music lesson and tell us it is replaced by a maths or English tests or tutorials’, Teacher Ma continued, ‘now the class director or other exam subject teachers would just walk into my office and ask me if they could take over my music lesson time slot’. ‘If it is at the beginning of the semester, I sometimes can refuse their request. But if it is close to examinations, I would have to choose but to give my lesson up since the students would not have energy for music lessons anyway’. Teacher Ma looked back upon her music lesson experiences and commented: ‘the music education in high school would never be able to prepare a student for university music programmes. Therefore students who have their heart set on music definitely take private lessons after school like what I did’. ‘So the music component of our curriculum is really just a formality in some way,’ Teacher Ma argued.

The best way for Teacher Ma to release her frustration was to devote herself to organise all kinds of different activities. ‘I was involved in the school New Year talent show and spring festival gala. Fellow music teachers and I selected student performances and acted as their art director. One group of my students performed folk dancing and won second place in our talent show’. Just as Teacher Ma being the favourite of her childhood music teacher, Teacher Ma also had her favourite students among her students. ‘Sometimes when I need to choreograph a dance, I always have in mind the group of students that I know would be able to do it’, Teacher Ma told me, ‘I do not know what is it with music teachers, but we always know who has got the music talent. As a result, I am always working with the same group of students’. As Teacher Ma reflected, ‘sometimes I feel like I am more of a student activity organiser than a music teacher’.

6.2.2. Qualification and Employment Status

Scott et al’s (1999) seek to exam teachers’ occupational motivations, satisfaction and health with a sample of 609 school teachers and management and report that teacher qualification being correlated with job motivation and de-motivation. The correlation is supported by Argyle’s (1989) review of literature on unemployment and mental health of the more general workforce in which he suggests lack of qualification is associated with unemployment and low self-esteem. Addison (2004) also utilised a mix-methods approach to explore the factors that influence teacher motivation in English primary schools and the findings echo Scott et al and Argyle’s point of view in terms of the link between qualification and job satisfaction and motivation. However, she suggests that teaching qualification is more positively correlated with job motivation than de-motivation, and therefore, better qualified teachers tend to be more satisfied and motivated. What’s more, she also reports that accredited in-service training also has positive impact on teacher morale and satisfaction.

Scott et al’s (1999) and Addison’s (2004) studies are similar in ways that they both paid close attention to different factors that might come into play in influencing teacher motivation including personal factors such as age and gender and school level such as school location and school culture. Therefore, both authors suggest that

it is important to take into consideration the interplay of multiple factors when looking at statistical trends emerged from their findings. The findings of my study agree with them in terms of the complexity in explaining the effect of teaching qualification on teacher' satisfaction and motivation, especially when individual, school and the wider society's perception of qualifications is considered.

Moreover, the impact of employment status on beginning teachers was also presented in teachers' narratives generated in my study. Despite psychological contract being a term to be further explored and defined, the role employment status played in influencing beginning teachers' emotions and expectations might be explained by the content of psychological contract and the consequences of the breach of the contract (Conway and Briner, 2005). Psychological contract is difficult to define for the reason that it exceeds mere documentation of either employer or employee's perceptions of what organizations/individuals should do as it also attempts to explore the exchange aspects of promises by both parties (Conway and Briner, 2005). Nevertheless, the implicit nature of psychological contract may in theory result in the breach of psychological contract caused by inequity and unmet expectations, although the impact of the breach on outcomes requires further theoretical and empirical evidence (Rousseau, 1994). Based on a large-scale longitudinal study on new teachers in their induction year in Scotland, McNally (2006) suggests that the one-year placement guaranteed by the Scottish induction policy has its weakness as it generates insecurity and confusion for beginning teachers as to what is going to happen after induction. The sense of insecurity was also reported by participants in my study which might also be argued to be associated with Maslow's (1968) concept of basic human needs for safety and belongings as mentioned before.

Therefore, this section presents how teachers in my study referred to themselves in relation to their qualifications and employment status in an attempt to explore the individual and collective values attached to qualifications and employment status.

6.2.2.1. Phase One Interviews

Teacher Luo from School B was very open about the fact that she did not do very well in her university entrance exams and that her parents paid extra sponsor fees for her university offer. She was also very conscious about her university not having a good reputation by recruiting a large number of students who failed the university entrance exams but were able to pay for sponsor fees. 'The quality of university teaching was very poor,' Teacher Luo described, 'and the students were only there to get a degree'. 'I do not think that students from top universities make better persons, but I really respect them for being able to get in because they must've worked really hard', Teacher Luo told me. After this, Teacher Luo rarely mentioned her university again.

The first several weeks had been intense for Teacher Luo. 'I am very nervous when I make lesson plans with my colleagues as there are so many problems that I have no idea how to solve', she continued, 'I know it is embarrassing but first grade (in senior secondary school) physics is a lot harder than I thought'. Even though Teacher Luo enrolled in a physics teacher education programme, she mentioned nothing about the training she received at university in preparing her for teaching.

Teacher Luo did not display any concerns about her employment status as a special-position holder. As mentioned in previous sections, Teacher Luo's parents, a local business owner, wanted her to get a university degree as soon as possible and come back to help with the family business. 'My parents did not seem to care about what subject I should study, they just hoped that I could get a university degree as soon as I can and then help them with their business. I did not want to go through the senior year in high school again, so even though I did not like ITT programme, I had to live with it', Teacher Luo told me. The reason to become a teacher, therefore, had something to do with Teacher Luo's decision not to follow her parents' steps and make something of her own.

Working in the same school, Teacher Xie studied psychology and was very proud of her university as one of the best normal universities (universities offer teacher

education courses) in China. Becoming a teacher of mental health and moral education provided Teacher Xie the possibility of combining her job with her passion for her major. 'Applied psychology was still a new subject in our university so there was always a question mark about what should we do after graduation in our head since we enrolled in the programme', Teacher Xie told me. 'My dissertation was a case study on journalists' occupational health which was so interesting', Teacher Xie said, 'but my classmates and I always had identity crisis because we could not really be called psychologist because we had no training in neurosciences or medical practice. We can not be counsellors too because we were not trained in that area professionally. I think we were trained to be researchers rather than practitioners'.

Teacher Feng used the word 'prestigious' and 'the best' to describe her university as she told me that she was seen as an idol by some students because of the university and the prestigious art programme she attended. Being considered to be a troubled student in high school, Teacher Feng felt happy when she saw how surprised her high school class director felt when she was informed that Teacher Feng was accepted by such a top university. 'When other art teachers first heard my university, they would always be amazed. Other new teachers, sometimes even experienced teachers, would come to me and ask me about my professors at the university and what courses were taught there', Teacher Feng said. At the beginning of the semester, Teacher Feng was motivated to work with her students and other colleagues because she could not wait for them to see what she could do. Being the only teacher in the school who was coming from such a prestigious university, Teacher Feng felt it was unfair as she considered that she deserved to be formally employed rather than having to be a special-teaching-post holder.

Teacher Fu's school principal in School D expressed his joy of having a new teacher like Teacher Fu who had a master's degree which really boosted his confidence. . 'Among us new teachers, there are two with master's degree. Me and another teacher, we have relatively higher qualification, so my bosses speak highly of us, they mention us all the time', he told me. Teacher Fu was also open about the fact that he did not perform well in his university entrance exams and the university he

got into in the end was not as impressive as he expected. ‘Ningxia University is not top-ranked; there are huge differences between students’ academic abilities’, Teacher Fu told me, ‘Lots of students skipped classes or played computer games all night; they cheated on the exams’. However, as Teacher Fu commented: ‘I was sort of self-controlled. I rarely skipped class or stayed up to play computer games. But I was not as motivated as I was in senior secondary school. But I was very diligent when I was preparing for graduate school entrance exams, I went to study everyday’.

‘I am very confident about my subject knowledge’, Teacher Fu told me. Teacher Fu went on to pursue a master’s degree in History as a result of his excellent academic record and his passion for the subject. But it was also due to the fact it was very difficult to find a job as a history major. Having a master’s degree did not help with his job-hunting either and the difference between the knowledge structure of university and graduate school level history education and that of junior secondary school also caused issues. Teacher Fu felt that the subject knowledge he acquired was not fully put into use because of the level of expertise required to teach junior secondary school and that students were not able to have the kind of the lively discussion that he used to have with his childhood teachers due to a lack of knowledge in history and literature.

Employment status was another issue on Teacher Fu’s mind. ‘The salary is so low. And the problem about employment quota, it makes me feel insecure’, Teacher Fu told me, ‘I always keep thinking about what would happen after these 3 years. Sometimes when I chat with my colleagues, we would worry about the pensions and other stuff’. Teacher Fu continued to express his concerns: ‘speaking of reality, people are realistic. I earn about 1000 RMB a month, and I am not formally employed yet. As a boy who just graduated, I am facing a lot of things, like starting a family and having a successful career’.

6.2.2.2. Phase Two Interviews

During the second interview, qualifications in terms of where beginning teachers went for university became a less frequent topic and were replaced by the concerns

over the tasks in hand. Teacher Luo developed a system of lesson planning with her mentor with several key questions to be addressed in accordance to the requirement of the curriculum such as ‘what are the key points and difficult points of this section?’ As Teacher Luo commented, ‘I need to prepare each lesson well to make up for the lack of solid knowledge base in physics because I do not want to mislead my students’.

Teacher Xie, on the other hand, was struggle with not having a helpful mentor with her lesson plan. ‘It was the first year the moral education class been transformed into mental health and moral education class...it is not easy to be the first teacher of mental health as it means there is no teacher in the school who has had the experience to share with me’, Teacher Xie told me. ‘I feel frustrated sometimes when I discuss my lesson plans with my mentoring teacher. In a sense we are both new teachers because she used to be a moral education teacher’.

Teacher Xie had sought for help from mental health and moral education teachers from other schools and professional training opportunities offered by local education authorities to improve her ability to balance her roles as both a teacher and a student counsellor. However, the lack of proper training as student counsellor and lack of support in studying the new curriculum had been the greatest concern of Teacher Xie. In School C, Teacher Feng was concerned with student management and how to incorporate exam techniques into art education.

These teachers were not very vocal about their employment statues with respect to financial needs. Closer examination is needed to decide if it was partially due to the fact that these teachers all came from relatively well-off family background. Among the teachers mentioned above, only Teacher Feng complained about her employment status but for the reason that she was rejected to participate in a teaching competition due to her special-teaching-post holder identity. On the other hand, as one of the only two teachers with master’s degree, Teacher Fu’s feelings towards his qualification and his employment status intensified during Phase two interviews. ‘I think last year

I still have hopes that something, like my job title, will be solved eventually. But now I feel more disappointed', Teacher Fu told me.

...I feel I am in an unfavourable position. You see, I spent four years on my undergraduate study, and another three years on my master's degree, altogether it is seven years. And being a special-teaching-post holder means another three years before becoming a formally employed teacher. So I spent 10 years to explore without social benefit like house benefit, medical care and pension which is the basic right that should be guaranteed by the government to its citizens...I think that if you have formal employment positions available, you should just give them to teachers who have master's degree...There is really nothing I can do about it. And it gives me headache and I could not sleep for a while because of it. I am stressed.

Teacher Yang from School F also had similar concerns which were emerged during the Phase two interviews. 'Sometimes our school does not have enough money to pay for teacher salaries so they have to pay us every other month to wait for government funds to be in place,' Teacher Yang told me, 'so often I have to overdraft my credit card to buy food and pay the money and interests back later when I get paid. But after that I barely have any money left to save'. Teacher Yang continued to express her concerns: 'as a girl of my age, I get a lot of pressure from my parents because they think I should get married and have children by now...but I do not think I am financially ready for serious relationship because now I barely have any savings'.

The assessment procedure at the end of the three-year special-teaching-post contract was another popular concern for beginning teachers. The anxiety was largely caused by a lack of detailed explanation in the policy document concerning end-of-contract assessment and further contractual procedures.

6.2.3. Professional Relationship with Students

Various authors have chosen their metaphors of teaching which, as Webber and Mitchell (1996) suggest, evoke their particular ideologies and images of teaching that embedded in their work, among which include Scocrates' teacher as mid-wife, Confucius' teacher as role-model, Dewey's teacher as artist/scientist, Skinner's teacher as technician, Stenhouse's teacher as researcher, Eisner's teacher as artist and

so on. There is also growing interest in the study of the metaphors used by teachers to reveal their self-understandings (Bullough, 1991; Hunt, 1987; Munby, 1986; Provenzo, McCloskey, Kottkamp, & Cohn, 1989; Russell & Johnston, 1988). These studies usually reveal contradictory findings. For example, de Castell's (1988) compares day-to-day interaction between students and teachers to warfare which is quite different from Bullough's (1991) participants' metaphor of seeing teaching as a form of mothering.

One common characteristics of these authors' work is that pupils are used as the major reference group. As Nias (1989) points out, children have the capacity to validate or destroy a teacher's self-image and self-esteem since teachers spend most of working days with pupils and the interactions become reality-definers for teachers. Reference groups, argued Nias (1989), are critical in shaping teachers' perceptions of the teaching process and their self-image.

How a person defines the situation, which perspective he uses in arriving at such a definition, and who constitutes the audience whose responses provide the necessary confirmation and support for his position...(the use of reference group allows us to focus) attention upon the expectations the actor imputes to others, the communication channels in which he participates, and his relations with those with whom he identifies himself (Shibutani, 1955: 171)

As Shibutani (1955) points out, teachers may rely on the existing norms associated with the professional relationship with pupils as an organizing device with which to deal with new experiences and situations. From a moral perspective, authors such as Cambell (2004) and Pantic and Wubbels (2012) suggest that the ways in which teachers relate to their students make explicit the moral values teachers behold. Carr's (1993) broad definitions of two contrasting philosophical approaches, namely paternalism and liberalism, to the question of justifiability of teachers' moral roles, suggested Panti and Wubbels (2012), could to a certain extent explain the various images and metaphors mentioned above.

Paternalism, explained by Carr (1993), features the idea of setting a good example for others since certain individuals' superior insight, wisdom or knowledge give

them the right or assume them the responsibility to decide what is good for others. Therefore, according to paternalist point of view, evaluative perspectives are not of equal worth and values are inherently right or wrong. In consequence, the task of education is to transmit values that are objectively true, right and good; and the personal qualities of a teacher need to be consistent with and cannot be separated from what he/she displays in professional life.

For example, Confucius's image of teachers, a popular reference for participants in my study, is embedded with arguably a paternalist ideology. Confucius believes in the good nature of human being and therefore teachers' job is to become role models whom their students could imitate and even compete with to realize their good natures. In other words, for Confucius, the role of teachers is not so much to explain or discuss what is good or right as to show it directly in their lives so that the learners can try to emulate it. However, he considers it to be teachers' responsibility to evaluate individual students' merits and flaws so that they could help restrain the bad beliefs and ideas (Shim, 2008).

Liberalists, on the other hand, are sceptical of the notion held by paternalists that teachers might be justified to impose values by positioning themselves on the moral high ground. They also disagree with the tight connection between the personal and professional morality and conduct of teachers. According to Carr (1993), liberalism represents the view that the aim of education is to develop young people's qualities of rational autonomy which will provide them with the freedom of expression and enable them to make decisions for themselves as to what is right or wrong. Hence, teachers, same with students, are also entitled to freedom of expression and choice as long as their conduct does not violate professional ethics or standards.

While worrying about paternalist beliefs give very little recognition to cultural relativity of values (Hofstede, 1986), Carr (1993) is also concerned with liberalist's approach which arguably leaves too much room for what might be considered as negative and damaging personal examples to pupils and too little for positive values because it is concerned with students being overly exposed to substantial value

positions. The dualist approach in categorizing how teachers (should) see themselves can also be seen in labels such as conservative and progressive (Webber and Mitchell, 1996) and student-centred and teacher-centred (Huang, 2004).

But as Webber and Mitchell (1996) rightly argue, these labels are themselves already overburdened with social, political or academic stereotypes and are used to either approve or dismiss images or concepts without subjecting them to a contextualized scrutiny. Therefore, they suggest that it would be more helpful and productive to view them as interwoven instead of dichotomizing them, especially in observing and interpreting in action, which could be beneficial to teachers, teacher educators and researchers when an awareness of multiple social influences and framework for interpretation is developed.

The benefit of such categorization, on the other hand, is that it provides a theoretical framework for analysis and understanding. One helpful categorization comes from Pantic and Wubbels (2012) who conceptualised interpersonal relationships between students and teachers in terms of teachers' levels of control and affiliation. Based on Leary's (1957) research on interpersonal diagnosis of personality, Pantic and Wubbels (2012) applied the terms control (e.g. authority and influence) and affiliation (e.g. warmth and care) to teaching situations and developed a two dimensional diagram which posits teachers into eight types of interpersonal relationships, namely steering, friendly, understanding, accommodating, uncertain, dissatisfied, reprimanding, and enforcing represented as eight sectors of the circle.

Britzman (1986) has commented on the importance of control in the classroom:

Both teachers and students implicitly understand two rules governing the hidden tensions of classroom life: unless the teacher establishes control there will be no learning, and, if the teacher does not control the students, the students will control the teacher...A teacher-centred approach to learning is implicitly sustained since this myth assumes that students are incapable of leadership, insight, or learning without a teacher's intervention (p. 449).

Pantic and Wubbels' (2012) diagram shows case the complexity of the issue of power as commented by Britzman (1986) that dichotomised terms such as nurturing images and controlling images are not necessarily mutually exclusive. As Pantic and Wubbels (2012) point out, the tendency to strictly polarize them might prevent an open-minded dwelling on the deeper meanings of authority and caring from happening. A more nuanced awareness of the complexity and interconnectedness of contextual factors, authority, responsibility, and nurturing might be essential to a well-anchored sense of professional identity that integrates personal as well as social aspirations.

Another aspect lies with Confucius notion of learning for self-cultivation. He says, "From fifteen, my will was set upon learning; from thirty, my heart was set upon the firm ground; from forty, I was no longer tempted; from fifty, I realized the great principle of the cosmos; from sixty, I came to understand the deep motivation of people; from seventy, my every conduct agreed with the great principle". This passage indicates the continuous growth of Confucius as a whole person throughout his life which echoes his concept of teaching and learning. Ames and Hall (1987: 44) point out that the original character of *xue* (to learn) is to teach; therefore, scholars sought to become learned men through teaching as well as studying. One becomes aware of life's difficulties and strengthens himself through teaching; the top part of the character, *xue* (to learn) is to lock, which means two hands interlocked in mutual support (Ames & Hall, 1987: 339). The point here is that "to learn" in the Chinese character indicates personal growth through the mutual efforts of teaching and studying. In other words, we improve ourselves both by teaching and studying.

Interrogating the images of teachers that beginning teachers incorporate into their professional identity helps them reframe their own personal choices. Therefore, this section aims to elicit the images of beginning teachers participated in my study and show case how far these images remained stable over the duration of a first year of teaching.

6.2.3.1 Phase One Interviews

Information technology Teacher Liu from school F saw herself as students' friend when she first started teaching. As an optional course teacher, Teacher Liu enjoyed the fact her students can relax in her classroom and felt that she had the opportunity to establish equal relationship and trust that other subject teachers may not be able to have. 'I love how kids come to my class to escape,' she told me, 'information technology class did not have regular homework and midterm exams like the other subjects have, so students usually see this 45-minute class as time for relaxation and fun'. Even when her students lied to her to install and play computer games on school computers, she still felt like she was betrayed by her friends. 'I think I just felt a little upset because I thought I was someone they would trust and they would tell me about the computer game', she told me.

Teacher Xie from B called her students her 'kids'. As a boarding school teacher, Teacher Xie was empathetic towards her students because she also left home at an early age to go to a better school in a different city. 'Life of these students are not easy', said Teacher Xie, 'especially when they are sick and could not take care of themselves'. Also being a young teacher, she was always mistaken by new colleagues as a student. 'I sometimes feel like I am one of them, just a bit older', she told me. Teacher Xie described herself as independent as a result of living alone as a child and having to take care of her siblings. 'Sometimes I know it is probably more beneficial to let these kids take care of things for themselves', she told me, 'but it is difficult for me sometimes because they just feel like my sisters'.

However, in the classroom, Teacher Xie felt like it was necessary for her to hold her composure and be serious. 'The old boring moral education class', as she put it, was not always the most popular subject and Teacher Xie struggled with class discipline issues. 'At first, I guess I give them quite fresh feeling as a young teacher. But after a while they start chatting in class', she continued, 'I would pull a long face or raise my voice to stop them. It only worked for a few times until they found out that was all I can do'.

Teacher Fu also wanted to befriend with his students. But soon he found the new generation of kids difficult to interpret. 'These children who were born after the 1990s, they have their own ideological problem, children have children's nature. If a teacher really becomes equal partners to the students, 'after you give them your nose, they want your whole face' (be insatiably greedy)', he observed. Being a deeper believer that teachers should be role models for their students, Teacher Fu believed that his conduct was consistent with what he would like his students to be, such as treating people the same way he wanted to be treated. However, there were also things that he did not believe, that were the 'education system' which allowed large classroom size which stood in the way of establishing closer relationships with his students and the exam-oriented approach. 'Under the current educational system in China, all we can do is to show our sympathy for the students, but we still have our responsibilities', said Teacher Fu.

In the classroom, he saw himself as old fashioned lecturer type who adopted 'traditional teaching model of teacher autocracy' and 'drilled all these information into students' heads', as Teacher Fu described. Teacher Fu had doubt about his teaching style when he received constructive criticism from his mentor and other observing teachers. However, he was still attracted to the 'charismatic' type of teacher who possessed profound knowledge and could draw students' attention by his language. Therefore, he would like his history class to be 'story-telling' sessions during which he could utilise his knowledge of Chinese history and literature to deliver Pingshu (Story-telling of Chinese history events or folk stories) and Xiangsheng (comedy dialogue). '(My) students would love to hear. It is more like me', commented Teacher Fu.

6.2.3.2 Phase Two Interviews

In the second semester, after taking up a new role as assistant class director, Teacher Liu found herself in a warfare situation with one of her very rebellious students. She had used all sorts of strategies such as protecting the student's pride by having private conversation with him, criticizing the student in front of the whole classroom,

and so on. Every time she was challenged by even more aggressive behaviour which gave her a 'big headache'.

Teacher Liu was also surprised when she tried to contact this student's parents for consultation and was given a cold shoulder. 'The parents told me that they were not responsible for their son's behaviour at school because, you know, he was in school', she told me. Teacher Liu had always believed that family education was even more important than school education because parents spent more time with their children. 'Lots of students' parents in our school are peasants or migrant workers', observed Teacher Liu, 'one of my students' parents sell vegetables in a farmer's market from 4 o'clock every morning to late at night. I could understand why they do not have time for their children'. 'Most of these parents did not go to school themselves', she added, 'I guess they do not even know how to teach their kids if even they want to'.

Teacher Liu had always told her students that working hard at school would give them a bright future. One day, a student walked in her office and saw her salary slip. A few days later, the same student was called to her office because he did not finish her homework. The reason the student used shocked Teacher Liu and left her speechless. 'He told that me what his father earns in a month is more than what I earn in a year', Teacher Liu told me, 'so he said what was the point of studying hard and go to university like I did? He would do just fine like his parents'.

In School B, being a good listener and developing understanding of the individual needs of students was an important part of Teacher Xie's job as student counsellor. Now she realised that simply being nice and caring would not earn her the trust of her students. However, her other responsibility as mental health and moral education class teacher presented her with the challenge of balancing the role between classroom teacher and student counsellor. 'sometimes when I have to be serious in the classroom to deal with some discipline issues, I feel like I am shutting the door to my students who are supposed to see me also as their counsellor', she told me, 'I tried to put myself in their shoes and I kind of understand it – how can one student open up to me when I just yelled at him a minute ago in the classroom?'

In semester two, also becoming an assistant class director, Teacher Fu had firmer idea that he can never be the ideal of teacher his students expected. ‘I do not think my students really know what kind of teacher they want’ he commented, ‘they say that they want strict teachers and they say that strict master brings up accomplished disciples. But when they do not finish homework on time they want teachers to give them a break. They say that they want teachers to be reasonable, but they are pretty stubborn when they are being unreasonable’.

Teacher Fu realised that his original idea of ‘imparting knowledge’ was not enough in history class and he attempted to add different teaching techniques to lesson plans, even though he did not consider his old teaching style to be problematic. For example, his story-telling method helped to convey the emotional aspect of history teaching. ‘I agree that the history subject should focus more on the emotion aspect of teaching, such as love for our country and our nation, love for history in general. But these kids are still young, they need to accumulate knowledge at this stage because emotions can not be derived from the historical facts. I guess this is why I like to give lectures and to tell stories’, he told me, ‘I can only say different teachers have different understandings and adopt different approaches’, he commented, ‘it all about balancing different teaching methods’.

Nevertheless, he still reflected on the criticism he received: ‘now teaching history also means teaching the methods of learning history, for example, from illustrating, knowing, and telling, to summarising, understanding, and concluding, to comparing, discussing and evaluating’.

Even though Teacher Fu was discontent with the exam-oriented system and the fact that history was just a minor subject, he showed his sympathy to his students in his own ways. ‘As a minor subject, we try not to give children too much homework because we feel empathetic for how much time they spent on their major subject’, he told me. But he was disappointed by his students’ lack of passion and interests in history and literature that he had:

I think very few children nowadays have the same enthusiasm for history as I had when I was in school. I do not know why. I chose to major in history because I am fascinated by history. History helps you better understand the future...Chinese history is embedded with both extensive knowledge and profound scholarship. It is very interesting.

6.2.4 Professional Relationships with Mentors and Colleagues

Hargreaves (1994) argues that strong and positive cultures of teaching, which comprise beliefs, values, habits and forms of action that reflect the shared mission of the school or teaching community, can strengthen teachers' sense of efficacy and build motivation. He suggests that, since culture carries the community's traditions generated by past practices and collective agreements to its new members, it helps give 'meaning, support, and identity' to new teachers and their work (1994: 165). In this respect, Hargreaves considers relationships with colleagues provide a critical context for new teachers to develop their teaching styles and strategies because even though teachers work alone in their classrooms but 'what goes on inside the teachers' classroom cannot be divorced from the relations that are forged outside it' (1994: 165).

Three broad forms of teacher cultures brought forward by Hargreaves are relevant here, namely individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality, and balkanization, which consist of different characteristic patterns of relationships and forms of association between teachers in their own communities. He also identifies a fourth form, balkanization of teaching, which will be discussed in the next section (2.5).

Individualism features classroom isolation which allows teachers to stay away from outside interference and provides them with certain level of privacy which is visible in Lortie's (1977) work where majority of teachers he interviewed preferred to work alone. However, it also comes with a lack of feedback from competent peers on the value and competence of teacher's work. The reason for the preference is varied. For example, Lortie (1977) suggests that it might be the result of uncertainty and anxiety on beginning teachers' part that led these teachers to rely on past experiences as students which informed their teaching styles. McTaggart (cited in Hargreaves, 1994:

170-171), on the other hand, points out that working conditions of teachers dominated by principles of bureaucratic rationality such as standardized curriculum and textbooks leave no room or necessity for teacher participation in and collaboration on curriculum development.

Collaboration and collegiality highlight collective learning and development. Apart from being able to enhance confidence, expertise and commitment of teaching communities, Hargreaves (1994) suggests that the increasing popularity of the collaboration and the collegiality culture is also due to their effectiveness in implementing externally introduced change such as the implementation of centralized curriculum reform.

Smith (1995) outlines several principles that are embedded within the collaboration culture. He argues that collaboration offers moral support that carries teachers through time of uncertainty or frustrations. Well coordinated collaboration can also increase efficiency and improve effectiveness as the collective decision making and resources sharing can reduce the workload of individual teachers and provide situated certainty by revealing tacit knowledge of teaching that goes beyond externally imposed contents and guidelines. As with Hargreaves, Smith (1995) also points out the political assertiveness of collaboration in strengthening confidence in externally introduced innovations.

Nias (1989) also regards teachers' relationships with colleagues to be equally as meaningful and influential as those with pupils. She describes in detail how inexperienced teachers, and sometimes even experienced teachers, may see their colleagues as 'models', 'standards', or 'professional parents' as a way of looking for reassurance and confidence. Ball (1987) agrees with Nias (1989) in terms of the staffroom politics such as gossip and rumour that may create friendships or tensions between colleagues.

Hargreaves (1994) distinguishes collaborative cultures with contrived collegiality in terms of how collaborative activities are implemented. He describes collaboration as

spontaneous and voluntary while he sees contrived collegiality as being administratively regulated and compulsory. One of the critiques of collaboration is that it can lack purpose and direction which results in superficial activities that are pointless (Smith, 1995). Contrived collegiality, with its implementation-oriented tasks and mandated planning procedures, may in a way ensure the quality and effectiveness of collaborative activities. On the other hand, strictly administered collegiality may also hinder the benefit of some spontaneous and unpredictable forms of collaboration.

Moreover, from a micro-political perspective, Hargreaves raises several concerns that are common to both cultures of collaboration and contrived collegiality. 'The exercise of organizational power by control-conscious administrators' may utilize cultures of collaboration and collegiality as a way of coopting teachers to obeying administrative regulations and the implementation of policy mandates or purposes of others rather than aiming at personal development (1994: 191). Smyth agrees with Hargreaves that collaboration and collegiality used as management device might become an odious obligation and suppress teachers' desire to participate on their own initiative. Smith (1995) is also concerned with the consensus-driven interpretations of collaboration and collegiality which, in Smyth's terms, might create a comfortable and complacent environment which consolidate existing beliefs and practices rather than challenging or improving them.

The latter point echoes Hargreaves' (1994) arguments that collaborative and collegial activities can be distinguished in terms of their implication for teacher independence as individual teachers' rights of individuality against group pressure should be considered. Hargreaves (1994) also argues that individuality and solitude should not be passed as individualism and isolation. Individuality, according to Hargreaves (1994: 178), differs from individualism in ways that the former refers to the power to make independent judgement based on individual initiative and creativity; while solitude differs from individualism in ways that it display qualities of intellectual maturity and the capacity to reflect on individual actions. However, the attempt to

eliminate individualism may risk eliminating opportunities for individuality and solitude as well.

As to my own study, in accordance with Hargreaves (1994) and other researchers' (Day and Gu, 2007; McNally, 2006) emphasis on the relational context of teaching, I also focused on how participating beginning teachers talked about themselves in relation to their colleagues including their mentors and other peers which, according to Mauthner and Doucet (1998), could enable more private values and ways of being to be explored. The images that my participants described in relation to their colleagues to a certain extent reflect the complex nature of collegial relations discussed by Hargreaves (1994) and Smith (1995). My data agrees with Nias' (1989) findings on 'modelling' of colleagues and staffroom politics (136). It also agrees with Hargreaves' concerns over the implications of collaboration and collegiality for 'individuality and solitude' (1994: 191) and with Smith's (1995: 155) critiques on the kind of collaboration being administered for political compliance that suppress individual beliefs and values which silences challenging voices against potential ethically bankrupt reforms or changes.

6.2.4.1 Phase One Interview

English teacher Teacher Wang from School E came from a large school community with more than 30 English teachers working together in the English department. 'Our school consists of four campuses,' Teacher Wang told me, 'even though I only work together on a weekly basis with English teachers in my own campus, we still have monthly meetings that involve teachers from all four campuses'. 'Sometimes it feels so great having so many English teachers in one school', she commented, 'it makes me feel proud'.

Like many other beginning teachers, Teacher Wang considered herself as a student, especially in relation to her mentor whom she usually called 'teacher' with deep respect. 'My mentor is also new to this school; but she is very experienced and successful in her old school in another city', Teacher Wang described her mentor to me, 'in a way she is like a lot of English teachers of her age. She may not have the

perfect English pronunciation but she is really a master of English vocabulary and grammar'. Teacher Wang reflected: 'Sometimes I know how to write a sentence in English but I could not describe why it should be to my students. I rely too much on my language sense which is of course also considered to be important'.

'I have always been good at learning languages,' Teacher Wang said to me, 'but learning for myself is very different from teaching it to students'. She further explained: 'when I was learning English I feel like I could give up the relatively easy textbooks and use other materials as long as I get decent grades. Sometimes I rely on American soap operas and English songs to form my language sense. Along the way I could learn new English words and enhance my listening. But as a teacher, I cannot do that anymore. I need to fulfill my responsibility which is to help my students master what they are supposed to learn according to the English curriculum outline'.

Weekly meetings with her mentor and other English teachers, therefore, provided opportunities for Teacher Wang to make clear all the confusions she had concerning grammatical rules. 'The meetings are very important for me because I need to listen to how other teachers make lesson plans and give instructions in the classroom', she told me, 'my mentor would usually lay out the key points and difficult points outlined in the curriculum guidance and explain each point to us beginning teachers'.

'My lesson plan now is very structured. I usually take notes of what the other teachers are planning to do and then choose the best ones for my own class', Teacher Wang told me, 'my mentor would then go over my lesson plan and give me suggestions. She also made me a copy of her lesson plan from last year which is so useful to me'. One of strength Teacher Wang considered herself to possess in comparison to other English teachers was her oral English and pronunciation. 'Some of my colleagues are from rural background. So they are very strong at noticing and explaining grammatical mistakes. But I think that listening and speaking skills are equally important. So I want to keep a part of my learning ritual in my teaching plan,' She explained, 'I would spend five minutes at the beginning of each class to teach my students an English song. It is a fun way to learn English and to warm up'.

Also working as an English teacher, Teacher Shan from School A experienced similar challenges as Teacher Wang in terms of teaching grammar and vocabulary. ‘Our principal set up a regulation that all key exam subject teachers need to take the university entrance exam each year too and we need to get a very high grade to pass the teacher evaluation,’ she told me, ‘I am very nervous about this. Even though I am confident about my English speaking and listening, these two elements are not part of the university entrance exam’.

Nevertheless, Teacher Shan enjoyed the sense of direction given by her mentor. ‘Our department has weekly meetings for grade one English teachers and also weekly meetings with all English teachers so that the problems higher grade teachers find in their students could be addressed by us lower grade teachers in advance’. ‘We are all given the same format of lesson plan notes and materials so that we are all on the same page as to what should be covered in class’, Teacher Shan told me, ‘then my mentor usually work alone with me and check my plans before the observation sessions’.

Comparing to other beginning teachers, Art teacher Teacher Feng from School C was less concerned with classroom teaching and lesson plans during our interview. Being extremely confident about her painting skills and knowledge of art, Teacher Feng felt the respect and appreciation for her skills from her mentor and colleagues. The weekly meetings were considered less important for art teachers as Teacher Feng told me: ‘teaching students aiming for university art programmes is different because university art exams, even though vary in forms as they are designed by individual universities, share the same basic knowledge base and skills to be tested. So mostly we decide on what we will be focusing on this week, for example, plaster statue sketching, and then we work on our own’. ‘I guess this is why having the opportunity to be taught by some of the best painters is such an important experience for me because lots of the techniques and observation skills in painting cannot be learnt through merely instructions’, she explained, ‘I am able to show them some of the

great techniques in class. But if you do not know how to do it yourself, you cannot fake it’.

Teacher Fu from School D described his relationships with colleagues as ‘harmonious’. ‘Like our teaching and research section holds weekly and monthly meetings to talk about lesson preparations and to reflect’, he said to me, ‘our director of the section takes good care of us. We discuss our lesson plans on the meetings, and then the senior teachers give us suggestions. Our research and teaching office holds meetings, I learnt a lot. We have some amazing senior teachers, they are very knowledgeable. I learnt new things just chatting with them’. ‘All the senior teachers are very friendly,’ he continued, ‘our director of teaching affairs, he is an interesting person. He loves doing sports. Sometimes we talk about football stuff, and sometimes we go play balls. We also have staff sports game’.

Even though he considered himself as ‘a newbie’, Teacher Fu had very strong opinion in terms of what he would like his classroom teaching to be like. ‘My mentor would look at my lesson plans and give me suggestions. And other teachers who observed my classes also gave me suggestions’, he told me, ‘but at the end of the day it is still my problem’. He admitted that he was focused by the student-centred teaching approach advocated by the curriculum reform and school colleagues. ‘I am aware of that I am very confused by this student-centredness. It is just a very theoretical concept’, he explained to me, ‘many teachers who had observed my class found the same problem, that I don’t interact with the students much...I am very self-directed. Regarding the teaching methods, I like to have my own style. There are too many things to teach, I don’t know how much information is appropriate’.

His independence also showed in his relationship with his mentor. Even though he had great respect for his mentor, as he described, ‘(when I had problems) I basically turn to my mentor. (My mentor) is a teacher with senior title and very experienced’. He continued, ‘but generally speaking, the difficulties I have in teaching need to be solved by myself. These things are not to be understood by listening to other people, I need to explore by myself’.

Teacher Fu found the mentoring and observation sessions organized by his school to be useful. But he had complaints about the other form of professional development activities that he attended. ‘To be honest, some training sessions are just format, like English and computer classes. These are compulsory, but we go only for the certificate, we already know what they teach’, he commented.

6.2.4.2 Phase Two Interview

In the second semester, Teacher Wang made two observations. Firstly, Teacher Wang was concerned with her mentor’s approaches in teaching students with good academic and less satisfactory performance. ‘Olympic English competition is a big deal for my mentor and other English teachers’, Teacher Wang said to me, ‘when I was a student I also considered it to be a great honour. But now I feel like helping students from rural background whose English abilities are seriously lacking is a more important task’.

‘Sometimes when we have our monthly meetings, our principal would come to motivate English teachers in cultivating winners of English competitions,’ Teacher Wang told me, ‘my mentor has been mentioned many times as a good example because she had several students from her old school who performed very well in these competitions and then were pre-accepted by universities because of their achievement in English learning.’ She commented, ‘what I feel is that a teacher’s success should be, in a sense, measured by her least successful student. But now students with the best English grades are offered free competition training and they will become even better’.

Even though Teacher Wang benefited from her colleagues’ sharing of lesson plans, she found it difficult to understand the extent to which she should open up to her colleagues. ‘I know it may sound a little selfish’, she explained it to me, ‘when we have observation sessions, mentoring teachers and principals would highlight the positive aspect of beginning teachers’ lesson plans. It has not happened to me yet, but one of my colleagues shared his idea with other teachers and was used by another

teacher. In the end that teacher was praised for this innovative idea which was not hers in the first place. So I am just wondering if we are to be judged on our own merits then probably we should keep something to ourselves so that we could have an edge over the others’.

Teacher Shan was more supportive in her school’s ways of teaching English. ‘I think the exam-based English teaching is more effective than I expected. In order to prepare for my own exam, my mentor works with me every week to study the past exam papers and review all the key and difficult points so that I really understand them. Now I actually have a new respect for textbooks because they are not as easy as most people think’, she told me, ‘I really think that if students can master the knowledge in the textbooks, it is more than enough for them to get a good grades at university entrance exam’. ‘Also I think that by working really hard and getting a very higher grade myself is able to gain me some respect from my students’, she added.

On the other hand, ‘it can sometimes get a little bit competitive,’ said Teacher Shan, ‘especially among teachers teaching the same subject. You know, beginning teachers worry that we are out performed by our peers while experienced teachers might feel embarrassed if they are out-scored by younger teachers’.

Teacher Feng, in the second semester, received some constructive criticisms about her teaching from her mentor and colleagues which were considered fair even though she did not agree completely. ‘One of the suggestions from my mentor is that I need to focus more on my students’ ability to apprehend very quickly what the tests given by examiners are designed for. Even though I think art education is not about these exams at all, I know it is very crucial for them to know that in order to get into a great programme’. ‘Also university art exams start at the beginning of their senior year, so it is ever to early to start’, she added.

On the other hand, Teacher Feng was not thrilled by some of her colleagues’ behaviours outside the classroom. During a conference hosted by her school, all

beginning teachers were asked to present papers about what they had learnt since they started teaching and how they evaluate themselves as teachers. Teacher Feng witnessed some of her colleagues who gave special treatment to students from powerful or wealthy families and she was upset when these teachers still talked about how they considered fairness to be one of their best qualities. 'I just heard teachers kept talking about how they cared about every child in their classroom. But I knew it was not true for some teachers,' as Teacher Feng told me, 'I just do not think they should say things that they do not mean or did not do'.

Teacher Feng felt she was more able to communicate with her mentor than some of her peers for the reason that her mentor could always give comments that 'were right to the point'. After she expressed her feelings towards the 'hypocrite' teachers, Teacher Feng was described by her peers as 'uptight and vain'. She agreed with her mentor's comments that it was 'better to judge with good judgment and own action' instead of 'harsh words and attitude'.

Teacher Fu interacted more with his class director mentor in the second semester after he took up the new responsibility of assistant class director. 'My mentor has worked as a class director for over 10 years and she is very experienced', Teacher Fu told me, 'she has taught me a lot of important things such as constantly communicating with subject teachers to get prompt response concerning student performance. It would be too late to intervene when things are out of control. Also I have learnt a lot about classroom discipline issues such as what is a proper punishment for being late for school or for chatting during class'.

Teacher Fu still saw himself to be different from his mentor. 'My mentor is the kind of class director who is very strict. She has made very strict classroom rules such as specific punishment...Students are scared of her. Once she establishes her authority, it becomes much easier to manage student behaviours', he continued, 'I could not be that tough yet, I am sometimes very soft. If students make mistakes, I usually do not punish them, instead I would just talk to them and help them see what is it that they

do wrong. But sometimes students are not grateful for my softness; they would just make the same mistakes over and over again’.

Speaking of learning from his mentors and colleagues, Teacher Fu found observation to be a more effective method. ‘Most of the time I will not just ask. It is more effective to observe how other people do it, unless it is things like how to deal with parents. I would turn to my mentor or other experienced teachers for that kind of problems’, he told me, ‘otherwise, I handle my own issues in school or sometimes I call my friends from university to talk about it. Basically I have not had any difficulties’. He further explained: ‘at first I did not know how to deal with parents, considering they are all much elder than me, like my parents or elder members of the family, like my uncles and aunts. After observing experienced teachers work and deal with parents and asking for suggestions, I find that, oh, parents and teachers are not equal in status. Parents are lower than teachers because you are educating their children and it is like you are doing them a big favour, but only if they are the type of parents who really take education of their children seriously and they would be willing to cooperate with teachers’.

Teacher Fu also made two observations in the second semester. Firstly, as he told me, ‘I was a little dumb at first, now I know my mentors deserve more respect. After all they are all senior. Now I do what I can in the office, like weeding the tables or watering the plants. All my mentors are nice and they offer me constructive criticism for my lesson plan when they observe me teaching’. Secondly, he learnt that not to be overly self-involved when interacting with colleagues. He gave me an example: ‘the leader of our history teaching and research section is very detail-oriented. He is very strict in terms of the format of our lesson plans and things like that. When I first started teaching, I thought he was too tough on me and I thought it was personal. But after a while, I know that it is who he is. He pays attention to details and he treats everyone the same’.

The harmonious relationship was, in Teacher Fu’s opinion, due to his philosophy of building relationship with other. ‘I think I am the kind of person that is easy to get

along with. I think I am this way because I live in the student dorm in college and four of us shared the same room. Each of us had bad habits and our own issues, but as long as we can be more forgiving and tolerating, we would not have conflict', he told me, 'It is the same working in this school as everyone is entitled to his/her own life style and you should not take everything too seriously'.

In the second semester, Teacher Fu still brought his self-directedness attitude with him. As he commented the usefulness of mentoring and collaboration activities, 'no matter how much help you receive from other, it is what you do that matters. Even if you get nothing from the school, if you work really hard and ask when you need help, then I think you will be fine. Especially for teachers, each of us has our own style, so we need to explore things by ourselves. It is not like we could become good teachers if we are watched closely by our school every day. It is the individual effort that matters'.

The ability to work on his own initiatives was also considered by Teacher Fu as what was expected from his mentor and senior colleagues. 'I think my mentors would like me to be able to work independently as soon as possible', he told me; 'they hope that I could be able to deal with issues and problems I encounter in the classroom and teaching on my own initiatives'.

6.2.5 School and Academic Subjects

Lacey (1977) studied student teachers from different subject disciplines and found embedded understandings and agreements between members of the same subject groups. His findings are supported by Becker's (1961) argument on the formation of student sub-culture that sub-cultures emerge when individuals face same challenges or share same purposes. And therefore the intensive and extensive interactions between these individuals produce meaningful and implicit understandings. Lacey (1977) suggests that the development of sub-cultures may be the result of the influencing formal university structure which promotes homogeneity within a particular subject discipline department. McLeish's (1970) research on college students and lecturers supports Lacey's argument as it confirmed that the most

significant differences in attitudes existed between subject-specialists, student teachers of different disciplines, as well as college lecturers specializing in different subjects which were stronger than differences to those found in different political or religious belief groups.

Lacey (1977) is concerned with this tight sub-cultures between different subject disciplines for two reasons. Firstly, he argues that, while shared understandings may promote confidence and enhance communication, it might also produce misunderstanding, prejudice and rigid categorization between different groups. Secondly, the significant influence faculty has on students can be seen to indicate a lack of student autonomy in a way that students would have no opportunity to act on their own initiatives and would simply take over ideas brought forward by the faculty and administration. Lacey (1977), therefore, focuses on the development of anti-sub-cultures formed within the parent culture of students and argues that individual social strategies usually guide individuals to comply with group behaviour or to modify their actions in accordance with social forces.

When these findings are associated with beginning teachers at work, Hargreaves' notion of balkanized culture of teachers is relevant here. Hargreaves (1994: 212) refers to balkanized culture as a particular patterns of interrelationships among teachers that are neither in isolation nor collaborative at the whole school level. Rather, this type of sub-culture usually exists within smaller groups within the school community such as subject departments.

In a similar way as how student sub-cultures are formed, members of balkanized cultures may have inherited their attachment to the sub-communities through university education, teacher preparation, or school socialization. The existing school structure such as subject department working in isolation from each other may also contribute to the development of balkanized cultures as teachers' work are contained and defined in a contrived context (Hargreaves, 1994).

Moreover, balkanized cultures also have a political complexion to it. As Hargreaves argues, teachers construct and construe their own identities when they are socialised into a particular sub-community and are inducted into a set of assumptions and perceptions from a particular point of view. At the same time, balkanized cultures also bear self-interest when they compete for promotions, status and resources which are usually distributed unevenly due to existing hierarchies.

For example, Hargreaves (1994) found in his case study schools two sub-communities, namely the core subjects and exploratory subjects which are very similar to the findings of my study. The subjects at the schools in my study had been divided into two groups: key exam subjects and optional subjects. This division is based on the design of university entrance exam which attaches more importance to the included subjects while devaluing the rest.

Like the teachers of the exploratory subjects in Hargreaves' (1994) study, teachers of optional subjects in my study reported that they had been neglected and marginalized by teachers of key exam subjects. The marginalization also extended to optional subject teachers' relationship with students and parents as they felt that their subjects were not given the same amount of attention simply because of the exam-oriented examination system. Hargreaves (1994) also points out that this political marginalization might have more problematic consequences as the imbalances of power and status, along with the uneven distribution of resources and privileges, might make it difficult for different balkanized cultures to reach common agreement which threaten conditions of work, and more importantly, student learning.

6.2.5.1. Phase One Interview

Working as a junior secondary school history teacher, Teacher Fu constantly talked about himself and fellow history teachers as 'us optional subject teachers' because history was not a key exam subjects in senior secondary school entrance exams. Compared with key exam subject teachers, Teacher Fu had more spare time to himself as optional subjects were not required to give the same amount of homework

as key exam subjects. 'Generally there is no homework to grade' He said, 'I have a lot of spare time. I have all the weekends to myself, and I play football sometimes'.

However, he was still frustrated by the repetitive nature of teaching. 'Now the class size is too large. There are about 60 or 70 students in one class', Teacher Fu told me, 'and us history teachers are relatively relaxed (in terms of lesson preparation). But we have heavier teaching workload. I have 3 lessons a day each week, except one day that I only have 2 lessons. I teach 7 different classes (the same lesson). So everyday it is repetitions of all day lectures. Every day I basically say the same thing over and over and over again. Lesson preparation is in some way easier'.

Teacher Fu was sympathetic with his students' workload given by key exam subjects teachers. But he was still frustrated by students' attitudes towards history class. 'History in junior secondary school is not a core course, so students and parents don't take it seriously. So basically I have no contact with the parents', Teacher Fu told me.

Also working as a history teacher, Teacher Zhou from School E, a senior secondary school teacher, had better experiences in terms of gaining student attentions as senior secondary school students would be divided into science classes (physics, chemistry, and biology) and social science classes (history, geography and politics) at the beginning of their second year. 'My students would come to me sometimes to ask my suggestions about whether they should choose sciences or social sciences', Teacher Zhou told me, 'so at least I have some students who take history really seriously because it is going to be a core exam subject for them'. Art teacher Teacher Feng from School C was in a similar situation as School C was a senior secondary school specializing in art programmes. Teacher Feng, therefore, enjoyed the constant attention from her students.

Working in the same junior secondary school, English teacher Teacher He rarely described herself as a key exam subject teacher. Even though she only taught two classes, Teacher He needed to make new lesson plans every day because each class was allocated two English lessons every day. 'We probably have the heaviest amount

of homework,’ Teacher He commented, ‘students are required to memorize textbook units and vocabularies. I also ask them to keep journals in English and write monthly book report’. Her being regularly contacted by parents also in a sense showed the importance attached to English teaching and learning. ‘I always have anxious parents contacting me to discuss how we can improve their children’s English grades,’ Teacher He told me, ‘and those pupils with great English level still want to be even better. Only the first week I started working, I had a few students asking me if I would be willing to give them private tutoring’.

Also coming from School C, Chinese teacher Teacher Kang shared the same frustration Teacher Fu had which was not reported by other Chinese teachers. Even though Chinese subject was a key exam subject, it was considered to be less important for students aiming for university art programmes. ‘When I was in secondary school, it was always my Chinese teacher taking over art classes,’ Teacher Kang told me, ‘but now it is the opposite. Art teachers can come to me and ask me not to give students so much homework because they need to paint too’.

6.2.5.2. Phase Two Interview

In the second semester, Teacher Fu continued to complain about lack of respect for history subject. ‘It is history class again,’ said Teacher Fu, ‘so students do not pay enough attention and they do not really care about the grades’. ‘Although it has only been a year, I am a bit indifferent’, he continued to explain, ‘it is because of the mechanical and simple repetition. Especially for us who teach minor subjects. I teach several classes the same thing. It is a bit of a challenge as now what I care the most is not how to deliver active class each time, rather I am worried how I can be active and energetic enough to finish teaching the same thing to all these classes. I think I need to adjust myself, psychologically’.

Teacher Zhou, on the other hand, was not confident in giving suggestions to her students. ‘When I was in senior secondary school,’ she told me, ‘I was always sure that I will study history. But I do not know these students as well as I know myself.’ ‘What if a student makes a wrong decision because of my suggestion?’ Teacher Zhou

was concerned. She was also thinking about the collaborative teaching and learning between history, geography and politics subject teachers starting next year. ‘The university entrance exam now combines the three subjects in the same test to exam students’ ability to discuss a social problems by utilizing different subject knowledge,’ Teacher Zhou continued, ‘but we did not learn about the other two subjects in university. And I am not sure if am able to do it myself, let alone teach my students to do it’.

Continuing her usual schedule, Teacher He had extra responsibility in the second semester since she was also asked to prepare for students for regional Olympic English competition for junior secondary school students. ‘The student who wins the first place could go on to national level competition representing our province,’ Teacher He told me, ‘it is quite an honor’.

Teacher Feng and Teacher Kang shared similar concerns in the second semester. Teacher Kang felt that it was difficult to engage her students in Chinese teaching and learning activities. ‘I had students drawing comic books in my class,’ said Teacher Kang, ‘they were pretty good at painting. But I do not know if I should feel happy for them or feel bad for them’. Teacher Feng also faced challenges when she tried to persuade her students from an exam-oriented perspective to pay more attention to exam subjects such as Chinese, English and Maths. ‘You cannot get into a prestigious university art programme simply based on your painting skills anymore,’ Teacher Feng concluded based on her own experience. However, she struggled to effectively communicate her points of view with her students, especially students with behavior problems.

6.3. Summary and Discussion

In this chapter, I have attempted to present the sub-themes emerging from participants’ narratives in order to explore the ways in which my participants constructed or reconstructed professional identities through the lens of self-image in a context characterized by McNally (2006) as that of ‘relational conditions’ which was largely governed by the new relationships developed within schools,

departments, and classrooms as compared to the initial conception and images these teachers brought with them at the beginning. The narratives acquired at two different phases – starting of the first school year and the end of the first school year – suggested that, for my participants, biographical experiences played an important role in shaping their initial and ideal images of teachers and teachers' work. Even though teachers were from a diverse range of backgrounds, all participants believed that becoming an expert in their own subject and fulfilling the task of a teacher by acting as moral and ethical role models to be an important career aspiration which could be interpreted as the impact of Confucius traditions on teachers' role responsibilities mentioned in section 6.2.3 in this Chapter or the impact of school induction policy for beginning teachers which primarily focused on subject teaching and moral and ethical education as mentioned in Chapter 4.

Analysing the images or descriptions given by the participants also help illustrate the ways in which they were able to accommodate new experiences and enrich their initial conceptions with which they entered teaching. For example, beginning teachers in my study first occupied the role as subject teacher. But they were also aware of their pedagogical roles as moral role models, counsellors, or even nannies which went beyond simply imparting subject content knowledge. As some teachers taking up new responsibilities as assistant class directors, the process of identity construction was further complicated because they were no longer just passing through cooperating teachers' classrooms.

As Davies and Harre (2001) point out, all workplaces or situations provide individuals with several narrative resources for identity construction. As beginning teachers, my participants also faced the challenges of negotiating their professional identity as teachers. On one hand, beginning teachers expressed their intentions to resist pressures of the work situation and realize the ideals which were formed in their early learning years in practice. On the other hand, beginning teachers may adopt coping strategies such as 'strategic compliance' (Lacey, 1977) when they responded to contextual imperatives or their conceptions of ideals might be reshaped through their work experience.

‘The self is always built up out of something; it is assembly depends on the narrative resources available for self construction’, Holstein and Gubrium (2000: 161). What Holstein and Gubrium suggests is that the construction of identity through narratives can therefore be understood in relation to the extent to which individuals identify with the accessible resources within the context in which they work. For my participants, even though this process of identification can introduce uncertainty to teachers’ minds about their individual principles and their work, there is a sense of agency displayed by teachers in reflecting on their aims, abilities and relationships as they encounter difficulties, pressure and criticism. The emphasis on the role of agency is also supported by Giddens (1991) who argues that, for people who are pressured to rethink their beliefs, values, roles, biographies and ambitions in ways they have not anticipated, ‘the ideal self is a key part of self-identity’ as ‘it forms a channel of positive aspirations in terms of which the narrative of self-identity is worked out’ (68). This brings to the centrality of the ‘self’ in a relational process of learning to teach. My participants found themselves reflecting on their beliefs and actions when their preconception of the images of the possible in teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) and images shaped through the ‘apprentice of observation’ (Lortie, 1975) getting challenged.

This sense of self-reflection also echoes Kelchtermans’ (1993) conceptualisation of self-image as being closely connected to self-esteem which has an evaluative dimension with respect to how teachers perceive themselves in relation to their own and others’ expectations. Bullough (1987) suggests that metaphor analysis of self-images may encourage an overly narrow focus on self which might result in teachers becoming locked into a view of themselves and unreflective about their practice. But my participants’ narratives suggested that, even though the images shaped by early influences were strong, the impact of mentors and colleagues, pupils, and school regulations and cultures had been shown to be important at least in the very early stage of their career. My participants talked about how they perceived themselves as teachers through their professional relationships and practical implications of classroom or office incidents in a highly personal way in terms of their own

principles and preferences which also reflects the necessity in contextualising the self in the process of professional identity construction. As Wetherell (1996) points out, 'one's personal identity, conversely, will have contributed to one's choice of social identities or the personal way in which social identities are carried out' (40).

As Søreide (2007) suggests, teachers' narratives allow researchers to explore the narrative resources, such as personal history-based beliefs or cultural references, which teachers position themselves in favour of or in opposition to. Therefore, the construction of identity narratives can be seen as a process of identification with or rejection of the narrative resources which highlights a possibility of choice. Søreide (2007) also uses the term *reflexive positioning* to highlight the sense of agency as mentioned above. However, Scott (1996), drawing on Foucault's work, questions the level of autonomy individual teachers have in relation to the social, political, cultural and economic issues that are implicit in any representation of the self. For example, participants in my study were aware of the fact that the group of students they were working with had different needs and beliefs than they themselves had when they were pupils. However, some of them found themselves pushing the pupils towards the same pathways they went through as the schooling and examination system itself stayed the same. Teachers' resistance or hesitation in accepting prescribed notions such as student-centred teaching or compromising their own ideal images of teaching actually, in my opinion, provided an opportunity to consider different understanding of education and teaching where the pupils as well as teachers' well-being rather than examination results could be highlighted. Just as Britzman (1992: 24) argues, teacher identity is not synonymous with roles and responsibilities as role speaks to function whereas identity voices personal investment.

Kagan (1992) suggests that this openness to reconsider educational and pedagogical beliefs should have implications for teacher education programmes and professional development programmes as it would be more productive to build on student teachers or beginning teachers' needs and beliefs than to mandate prescribed content or approach just because these are considered more appropriate or sophisticated by policy makers. More importantly, as Holt-Reynold (1992) points out, it is equally

important to assess beginning teachers' abilities to apply their own rationales as well as to probe their rationales.

In this chapter, I attempted to explore the images of teachers and teaching my participants held to investigate how my participants were positioned within certain available identity sources and, therefore better understand how these images are experienced as meaningful. I found that it is difficult to reduce the complex classroom and school interactions teachers have everyday to categories or dichotomous dimensions such as student-centred versus teacher-centred or caring versus disciplining. Even dichotomous images of teachers are not necessarily mutually exclusive and it would be problematic to artificially polarize them for the convenience of researching or regulating. Rather, there are no generalisable explanations to why teachers were positioned within some identities as these choices teachers made need to be understood in the relational context in which the process of positioning took place. An awareness of multiple influences on identity formation, nevertheless, can empower teachers to make choices that are more conscious and personally meaningful.

Chapter 7 Subjective Educational Theory

7.1. Overview

Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994) describe *subjective educational theory* as a system of representations of the principles of teaching and learning that are embedded in teachers' narratives about the complex interaction between them and their environment. In these authors' terms, subjective theories constructed in narrative form reveal not only the general principles and knowledge teachers hold but also support and legitimize their daily practice experiences. Unsurprisingly, Kelchtermans' (1993) study itself also suggests that the content of subjective theories varies between individual teachers which might confirm his assumption that subjective theories are shaped and reshaped by individual biographies and contextual factors. My purpose in this section is not to explore another aspect or to construct yet another type of teachers' knowledge, but rather to take advantage of the already rich theoretical understandings to make sense of the perspectives of beginning teachers who participated in my study with respect to their own implicit assumptions about learning, teaching and their knowledge of themselves as reflected in their job-motivation and self-images.

Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe's (1994) arguments are consistent with their theoretical account of teachers' professional self and conceptual relationships between self and the professional self: 'The teacher as a person is held by many within the profession and outside it to be at the centre of not only the classroom but also the educational process. By implication, therefore, it matters to teachers themselves, as well as to their pupils, who and what they are. Their self-image is more important to them as practitioners than is the case in occupations where the person can easily be separated from the craft' (Nias, 1989: 202-203). Here Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994) agree with Nias (1989) in suggesting that self and the professional self overlap and therefore the knowledge, opinions, and values teachers hold about their educational activities are a very important part of the professional self.

As a product of personal biographies, the knowledge, opinions and values teachers hold cannot be separated from their experiences from the past and expectations about the future for the reason that ‘no two people have the same life experiences, we all learn to perceive the world and ourselves as part of it indifferent ways (Nias, 1989: 156)’ and that teaching is an occupation that involves the teacher as a whole person. The importance of understanding teachers’ subjective theories is supported by Ball and Goodson (1985: 18) who argue that ‘the ways in which teachers achieve, maintain, and develop their identity, their sense of self, in and through a career, are of vital significance in understanding the actions and commitments of teachers in their work’.

Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994) term this interpretive and conceptual framework by which teachers organize their knowledge and principles behind their educational activities and decision-makings as *subjective* for two reasons. Firstly, the subjective theories are subjective due to the nature of teachers work which influences beyond the classroom and school settings into teachers’ personal lives. Secondly, the subjectivity is also due to the situatedness of teacher learning which suggests that the ways with which a teacher constructs his/her knowledge are inextricably linked to his or her lived experiences and environment (McNally, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 1994). As Olson (2008: 18) points out, ‘who one is as a person’ may have impact on ‘who one is as a learner and a teacher’ because ‘life and learning also intertwine’. Therefore, the unique setting within which individual teachers live and work allows teachers to be able to reflect on their life, learning and practice to develop their own understandings of, and relationships to, the world.

Hoyle and John (1995) point out that how teachers’ professional knowledge should be understood and applied is a complex issue because of the different theoretical models that have been used to explain and describe teachers’ professional knowledge. They distinguish two opposing views of teacher’s knowledge, namely, a rationalist conception of knowledge that emphasizes the scientific claims to the validity and reliability of knowledge construction and a more interpretive perspective that highlights the personalised and tacit nature of teachers’ knowledge. The

adjective *subjective*, as Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994: 57) argue, refers to the ‘rational structure of this body of knowledge’ of teachers which respects teachers’ own voice and therefore avoids a too cognitivistic and rationalistic approach to knowledge.

McLaughlin (1999) argues that a rationalist approach or technical rationality is presented in Aristotle’s notion of “*techne*”. “*Techne* played a crucial role in the attempt by the Socratic philosophers to articulate a notion of rationality that would be more public and reliable than anything previously available”. It is defined as a “reasoned state of capacity to make”. This concept roots in the experience of successful fabrication and craftsmanship in ancient Greek. The makers understand the purpose of the product they makes, however, the established purpose is not determined by the maker themselves and the limitation is set beforehand. And when the maker is able to bring all the causal factors such as the “materials”, the “forms”, and the end of the making together following the rational direction, then he might be said that he possesses the “relevant *techne*” (Dunne, 1993: 249-250).

In Aristotle’s conception, the term of “*techne*” involves not only experience but also productive knowledge and understanding. And it is said that people who possess “*techne* (*technitai*)” should be wiser than those with only experience, because obviously the former know ‘the why and the cause’. And it is believed that the person who possesses “*techne*” is able to pass along his knowledge to others by teaching which suggests a strong likeness of seeing “*techne*” as a theoretical tool. (Dunne, 1993: 253).

This activity (*techne*) of using “technical knowledge” to make or make production (*poesis*) has a close relationship with the notion of technical rationality which applies scientific theories and techniques as a form of reflection to govern the teaching practice. Technical rationality, based on a positivist epistemology, “sees the laws of nature not as facts inherent in nature but as constructs created to explain observed phenomena, and science became for them a hypothetico-deductive system” (Schön, 1983: 33). Their accounts are grounded on the conviction of the possibility to give

any educational situations scientific explanations in order to make objective decisions and actions.

This approach is visible in, for instance, Gage's argument (1978) that in achieving teaching effectiveness, scientific knowledge as a system subject to rigorous laws, should be developed to guide teaching in order to yield high predictability and control. Olsen (2008) points out that the mainstream model of twentieth-century teacher education in the US also adopts such a mode, as reflected in Lagemann (2000) and in Kliebard's (1995) work which describes the process of teacher learning in which pre-service teachers learn pre-selected teaching theories and approaches in classrooms and then try to apply those theories in a supervised teaching practicum which enacts what they have been taught.

The more interpretive approach concerns with itself the 'practical wisdom' which is described by Aristotle as "phronesis". "Phronesis" portrays certain knowledge that enables human to be able to live well. It is acquired in one's action rather than making any product apart from oneself. "It is personal knowledge in that, in the living of one's life, it characterizes and expresses the kind of person that one is" (Dunne, 1993: 244). It is distinguished from "techne" that the latter refers to those activities whose ends lie outside of them (poiesis) and the former refers to those activities that themselves are their own ends (praxis). For example, activities like gymnastics or the playing of a musical instrument, compared to those activities such as house-building, should be described as 'performative' rather than 'productive' because these activities do not produce any reified or external products (Ibid. 254).

Praxis, as the activity Aristotle contrasted with techne, "is conduct in a public space with others in which a person, without ulterior purpose and with a view to no object detachable from himself, acts in such a way as to realize excellences that he has come to appreciate in his community as constitutive of a worthwhile way of life. Praxis required for its regulation a kind of knowledge that was more personal and experiential, more supple and less formulable, than the knowledge conferred by techne" (Ibid, 10). Involved in these non-instrumental activities, phronesis as a more

personal and experiential knowledge has intimate relationship to Schön's (1983) accounts for knowing-in-action and reflection-in-action.

Plenty of examples are given by Schön to illustrate tacit knowledge. For example, a tennis teacher tries to help the students how to hit the ball in the right way. But once the students recognize that feeling, they master the ability but they may not be able to describe how they achieve it or what the feeling is like. This capacity of knowing-in-action, says Schön, is revealed by "our spontaneous, skillful execution of the performances" and cannot be explained by words (1987: 23). But the consistent performance guided by the implicit procedures and rules and theories like riding bikes are not always there. So sometimes it is surprised to see that the 'routine procedures' may lead to an 'unexpected result'.

Technical rationality holds that practitioners are instrumental problem-solvers who select technical means best suited to particular purposes. Schön (1983) indicates that practitioners are only capable to solve the relatively unimportant and manageable problems on the "high ground" by applying the research-based theory and technique. However, in the "swampy lowland", messy, confusing problems of greatest human concern cannot be simply resolved by technical solution (1983: 3). He argues that the problems in the reality do not present themselves to practitioners as clear well-formed structures which can be easily solved by applying theory and technique derived from systematic and scientific knowledge. Also practitioners cannot treat all the unique cases as instrumental problems to which the solutions can be found in his stock of professional knowledge because sometimes "the case is not in the book" (1987: 3-5). Olson (2008) agrees with Schön's standpoint in pointing out the shaky theoretical premise of the rationalist approach that knowledge transfers relatively intact and straightforward.

Recognising that knowledge construction derives from more than just cognitive understanding and technical skills, authors such as Hoyle and John (1995), Goodson (2003), and Olson (2008) call for a more holistic approach in defining teacher knowledge which also takes into consideration the multiple dimensions of social

context and interactions and incorporates the multiple aspects of teachers' lives. Winch (2003:52), for example, stresses the importance of distinguishing and understanding different forms of knowledge in organizing and conducting practices. Apart from the technical knowledge as a set of norms of standard information and of how to apply them in appropriate situations, he also recognizes Schön's notion of tacit knowledge and proposes non-discursive practical knowledge as the kind of practical knowledge possessed by teachers but cannot be easily articulated.

Hoyle and John (1995) put forward the notion of biographical knowledge and contextual knowledge. The former recognizes one of the weaknesses of the technical conception of knowledge which depicts teachers as relatively weak professionals who can only act rationally by obeying set rules. It therefore highlights the biographical and personalized nature of teachers' knowledge which gives proper significance to the experiences of teachers and the interactions of personal-professional identities. The latter puts emphasis on the premise that professional knowledge is a two-way process. Teachers use academic knowledge and understandings to create a learning environment. But at the same time, the actual interaction also produces learning opportunities and reshapes teachers' understandings.

Bernstein (1996) adds a political dimension to teacher's professional knowledge by identifying the 'official knowledge' which refers to 'the educational knowledge which the state constructs and distributes in educational institutions' such as curriculum and curriculum reforms (65). This notion certainly goes beyond Hoyle and John's (1995) definition of subject knowledge which emphasizes the propositional and factual, as well as the conceptual underpinning of the subject and the belief structures that each teacher holds in relation to the subject teaching. Ball's (1990) conception of subject-matter knowledge includes the best ways to present subject knowledge and pupils' prior conception and autonomy which add another dimension to the already complex knowledge constructions.

In accordance with the above notion of teachers' professional knowledge as more than technical and factual knowledge, evidence from my study suggests prospective agreement with Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994) and Olson (2008) in their definition of teachers' subjective educational theories which assume knowledge as incorporating not only the aspects traditionally circumscribed within traditional definitions of teacher knowledge such as subject knowledge and practical knowledge, but also teachers' values, expectations, personal biographies and well-being, emotions, and dispositions. This holistic approach in looking at teachers' knowledge is visible in Olson's (2008) model of the construction of teacher knowledge. He argues that beginning teachers' evolving knowledge of teaching, learning, the subject, students and themselves are continuously shaped and reshaped by teachers' personal dispositions and conceptions as well as teacher preparation programmes' teaching approaches and contexts in which these teachers work. He emphasizes the importance of prior experiences produced by ways of viewing the world that go on to make sense teachers' current and future educational experiences. This model echoes Goodson's (2003) call for a narrative turn in exploring teachers' knowledge. 'In understanding something so intensely personal as teaching it is critical we know about the person the teacher is', as Goodson (1981: 69) points out.

My analysis of my participants' experiences is consistent with Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe's (1994: 51) imperative to look at teachers' professional development in a sense that subjective educational theories are to be revealed based on previous 'autobiographical self-thematization', which in my case refers to the analysis of teachers' job motivation and self-image as two emerging themes from teachers' narratives. Although each individual's narrative could only be best understood within the context of that teacher's life and experiences, an overall pattern emerged as all participating beginning teachers' evolving perceptions and changing attitudes were related to formative relationships that exerted a central influence on each individual's development (McNally, 2006).

First of all, the narrative-based interviews enabled me to understand these teachers' stories in terms of their conceptions of being a learner, which were shaped by their

previous learning experiences and the context in which learning took place, and reshaped or reinforced by their interactions with mentors and students. At the same time, the values attached to beginning teachers' own purposes of learning which motivated their learning and professional learning also had impact on their expectations for their students. Secondly, teachers' narratives revealed routines and practical knowledge as the type of knowledge that, as beginning teachers, they found themselves lacking or in immediate need of improving in order to gaining self-confidence and legitimate authority. Thirdly, even at the very beginning of their career, as reflected in their self-images, these teachers all demonstrated their own pedagogical understandings of what made them teachers that went beyond simply teaching particular skills or transmitting specific subject knowledge. The personal pedagogical principles that these teachers held, although stayed relatively stable, still met challenges when beginning teachers were confronted with practical situations and contextual restraints.

7.2. Beginning Teachers' Subjective Educational Theories

7.2.1. Being a Learner and Conception of Professional Learning

Cortazzi and Jin (1996) argue that culture of learning plays a crucial role in forming understandings of what it means to be a good teacher or a good learner. In their studies on language classroom teaching and learning in China, Cortazzi and Jin (1996) suggest that both teachers and learners sometimes are unaware of the extent to which a culture of learning may be influencing how the processes of teaching and learning are to be perceived. The culture of learning, in Cortazzi and Jin's (1996) term, refers to cultural traditions of the community or society in which the educational activities take place. Learners start to develop a sense of learning goals and strategies as they are socialized into the learning community since their –pre-school years at home and kindergarten. What's more, the early influence has a continuing effect on learners as they progress to secondary school, university, or even workplace.

For example, Cortazzi and Jin (1996) argue that, since learning Chinese in early years in China focus primarily on memory, imitation and repetitive practice, Chinese

teachers and students are more likely to adopt the same approach in learning a foreign language at a later stage instead of a more communicative approach. This example, of course, is just a glimpse of a more complex picture of the culture of learning. Jiang (2003) suggests that Chinese learners often encounter paradoxes as their perceptions and attitudes towards learning are shaped and reshaped by the contradicting debate between the autonomy and critical thinking required from the learners and the prescribed nature of what is considered to be worth learning, between the emphasis on self-cultivation as a whole person and the instrumental value attached to learning.

Shim (2007), by examining the role of teachers from the writings of Plato and Confucius, suggests that developing intellectual excellence through logical or critical thinking and aiding self-cultivation or growth are considered as two of the common categories across the two different philosophical perspectives. Similar to western philosophy, the activity of learning is regarded as a type of virtue as written in *Analects* (*Analects*, XIX) that virtue is in such a course that ‘there are learning extensively, and having a firm and sincere aim; inquiring with earnestness, and reflecting with self-application’.

For Confucius personally, learning for self-cultivation is a life-long endeavor as suggested in his teachings based on his own experiences: ‘from fifteen, my will was set upon learning; from thirty, my heart was set upon the firm ground; from forty, I was no longer tempted; from fifty, I realized the great principle of the cosmos; from sixty, I came to understand the deep motivation of people; from seventy, my every conduct agreed with the great principle (*Analects*, 2:4)’. Shim (2007) argues that this passage reveals what Confucius motivates all learners to do which is to seek continuous growth as a whole person, which is in a way echoes Maslow’s (1968: 190) notion of a self-actualizing individual. Confucius’ quotation of the ‘hereditary and constitutional’ roots of the individual self actually makes sense here as it reveals that self is always a unfinished product to be ‘reacted to by the person, by his/her significant others, by his/her environment, etc’.

Ames and Hall (1987) suggest that there is a modeling relationship between the teacher (Confucius) and the conveyed principles in a sense that the teacher strives to harmonize with and give credentials to what is to be taught by attuning the teacher's own behaviour to that of the model to be set for the students. Therefore, they observe that Confucius communicates with his students through actions and modeling rather than simply through defined concepts. As Zhu Xi (*The Analects and Collected Commentaries*, 1:1), one of the founders of Neo-Confucianism, suggests, everyone has a good nature but some people realize this good nature faster; therefore, learners need to emulate their seniors who realized their good natures first.

The focus of Confucius' teaching, argues Shim (2007), is laid on character building rather than knowledge seeking. As Confucius says (*Analects*, 6:20;15:33), 'one who loves the good is better than one who knows it, and one who enjoys it is better than one who loves it...when one comes to knowledge but does not sustain it through *Ren* (love or the ideal conduct), he is sure to lose it'. As a result, learners need to make the effort to realize his or her ideal state by practicing the knowledge he or she has acquired from teachers by living in accordance with it and by demonstrating it to the young. This is a prevailing theme shared by all of my participants as what they considered to be the qualities of a good teacher.

However, as Callan (1988) argues, a self-governing and centralized society may constrain its individual members. Four of the cardinal virtues, *Ren* (benevolence), *Zhong* (loyalty), *Yi* (righteousness), and *Li* (rites) for instance, have regulated Chinese ways of living for thousands of years (Pratt, 1992: 303). When Confucius' emphasis on moral sense of obligation and duty to family and the state are reinterpreted and reinforced by centralized feudal government, an individual's sense of self largely lies in relationships with others and recognition from the state which leads to the loss of self, leaving no space for critical discussion as to what these conceptions of virtues mean (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996; Jiang, 2003).

Moreover, the virtues prescribed by the state such as the purpose of learning as taking charge of family and the state have shaped the instrumental value of learning

in Chinese society (Jiang, 2003). Jiang (2003) suggests that the service exam that was adopted for thousands of years as the only channel to select individuals who realized the good principles and for an ordinary civilian to gain a government position and change social status had become intense and competitive. The elevated fame and increased standards of living as a result of gaining government positions had made this way of learning extremely popular. Jiang (2003) argues that nowadays the high status of the university entrance exam and the importance attached to the exam results are related to the instrumental value attached to learning in Chinese society. My participants' stories to a certain extent reflected the instrumental value of learning embedded within their choices of higher education and career. But as Cortazzi and Jin (1996) rightly point out, with respect to the enormous population of and diverse cultures even within Chinese society, the important differences between social class, urban and rural settings, and regional socio-economic conditions should be acknowledged. Moreover, the rapid change China is undergoing in terms of economic development and ideological dispositions also has impact on the extent to which learners conform to a certain culture of learning. On the other hand, beginning teachers participating in my study were exposed to ways of thinking different from their own perceptions as a result of their interaction with friends, colleagues and new generation of students also demonstrated elements of personal autonomy in an effort to 'struggle to become the author of one's worn world' (Pennycook, 1997: 39).

When teachers' professional learning is put under the microscope, there are two sets of dichotomies which have influenced how teacher learning is to be perceived. The first refers to previously mentioned technical-rational conception of teaching and a more complex view of teaching (Hoban, 2002). A technical or mechanical world view based on the truth of scientific knowledge is responsible for the conception of teaching as a craft or labour which views teaching as applying scientifically-developed techniques combined with objective knowledge and a set of desired outcomes. Its implication for teacher learning, therefore, is the emphasis on additional knowledge and skills to increase the mastery of technique which assumes a linear and transferable nature of formal knowledge transmission from teacher educators/textbooks to teachers and then to actual classroom teaching. The opposing

conception of teaching recognizes the theoretical relationships between knowledge and beliefs as well as the nature of knowledge as socially constructed. Therefore, it holds the perception that professional learning that leads to changing classroom practice is a non-linear process which needs to be supported by a combination of personal, social and contextual conditions (Hoban, 2002).

The second dichotomy refers to the formal and informal nature of professional learning experiences (McNally, 2006). Formal professional learning focuses on formal programmes of instruction, structured support and professional development activities while the informal conception calls for attention to the potential inadequacies of a standards-based support system and competence-based agendas which might overlook individual differences and unvoiced needs. As McNally (2006) points out, the idea of informal learning is not to label it as a 'god-given' solution to address beginning teacher induction. Rather, it promotes the assumption that knowledge construction is situated and socially-constructed. Similarly, teacher learning should also incorporate different aspects of teacher's lives in and outside of the classroom and with respect to teachers' own interpretation and evaluation.

Shulman (1987) points out the danger of polarizing the different conceptions of teaching or formal/informal learning as fundamentally oppositional to one another. However, Shulman (1988) points out that a dichotomy is helpful for the purpose of sharpening opposing lines of argument, especially when challenging established practice and ideologies. The implication for my study is that, when reading teachers' narratives, it is important to take into account individual experiences as well as social and cultural influences. This section, therefore, describes participating teachers' experiences of being a learner as they emerged from the interviews. How these teachers view their own experiences of learning had impact on their beliefs about teaching and their expectations for their students. The following section utilizes the theoretical themes of job motivation and self-image within the relational sites in which learning and professional learning took place to explore teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards learning.

7.2.1.1. Phase One Interviews

Teacher Chang was an excellent student in school and his university entrance exam scores were among the very best in the rural village school he attended. ‘It just felt natural back then that I needed to work hard because go to university seems to be the only way to leave this village and get a better life’, said Teacher Chang in describing his early learning experiences.

Teacher Chang chose teacher education programme for the reason that he could receive state scholarships and monthly allowance for student teachers so that he could shoulder the financial burden of his father in providing for his family. Teacher Chang did not like to relive his senior year in high school as it was like ‘living in hell’. ‘All the senior students woke up at 5am in the morning to read English textbooks or recite ancient Chinese poems or prose’, He told me, ‘then it was non-stop until 9pm in the evening. After that most students would still keep working on their bed until 11pm and go to sleep. The next morning the circle started again’. His father, a teacher working at his school, was very strict in monitoring their grades.

The reason he studied computer science was for the reason that he could be flexible enough to choose where he could work. ‘...at that time, I thought I can always choose not to be a teacher when I graduate, having obtained a bachelor’s degree’, he said to me, ‘that’s also the reason why I chose to study computer science, it’s very flexible’, he said to me. Even though Teacher Chang saw teacher education as a way to earn a bachelor degree that offered multiple employment options, he eventually entered the teaching profession as he discovered the difficulty in securing a permanent job elsewhere. The biggest attraction was the stable salary this job provided so that Teacher Chang could send money back home to help out his father.

For Teacher Chang, professional learning was an opportunity to better familiarize himself with his new job and become a competent teacher. ‘I think activities such as in-service training courses are a good opportunity to develop myself as a teacher because when you master a certain skill or gain a speciality you can take it everywhere with you’.

Teacher Liu was born and raised in a suburban region and had always felt embarrassed about that. 'I changed to a city school when I started high school, and I felt that my classmates looked down upon me all the time', she described it to me; 'it was not that they were verbal about it. It was that they always disapproved of my accent, my clothes, and even the music I listened to because all these things seemed to be 'suburban''. For Teacher Liu, exam grades gave her opportunities to prove that she was no less a good student than the others. However, the unsatisfactory result of her university entrance exam, in Teacher Liu's word, 'had negative impact on my self-confidence'. Teacher Liu considered herself to be more or less an invisible student as she was not favoured by her teachers and classmates. 'I always wanted to prove something', she told me, 'I think that's what motivated me to study back then'.

Teacher Liu also considered professional learning to be an opportunity of personal growth. 'It's like what we say to student everyday that you are not learning for your teacher or your parents, you should be learning for yourself', she told me, 'so I suppose professional learning is to learn things that are considered to be beneficial to my future development'.

Teacher Fu loved his schooling years as he got to experience the way of learning that he enjoyed. Teacher Fu was enthusiastic about Chinese history and ancient Chinese literature. His high school teacher recognised his passion and his talent, and encouraged him to take on the pursuit of knowledge by engaging him in lively debate and discussion of historical events and literature. 'I am really into ancient books and texts. The classical prose we learnt in senior secondary school, I can still remember', he told me, '...I had this feeling that, I needed to be interested in something. The things I was interested, I could work on it for days. The things I was not interested, I was not motivated to do them at all'.

For Teacher Fu, professional learning means activities that could 'improve teaching skills, in-service training, part-time degree study, and so on'. But he had his own view of the purpose of professional learning: 'Sometimes it is about regulation, like it is required if I want to be promoted. I generally think that learning is for personal

growth. It is important to improve my personal qualities. But things like building relationships with students; we have different students each year which requires accumulation of experiences’.

7.2.1.2. Phase Two Interviews

Teacher Chang enjoyed working as an information technology teacher as it was a non-exam subject and he had more free time to himself. The same with Teacher Liu who also worked as an information technology teacher, Teacher Chang liked the fact that his students could come to his class to relax a little bit from their intensive course work from key-exam subjects. ‘I do not want to push my students too hard on my class,’ he said to me, ‘the learning in information technology class is supposed to be fun and engaging’.

Teacher Chang told me that he participated in the in-service training sessions which would award him with certificate of in-service teacher training which were essential in future promotion. ‘Since I do not need to mark homework and I do not have too much teaching responsibilities,’ he told me, ‘I need to keep myself busy and do something useful and practical’.

Teacher Liu was stunned by her student’s comment when she told her students that working hard at school would give them a bright future. One day, a student walked in her office and saw her salary slip. A few days later, the same student was called to her office because he did not finish her homework. The reason the student used shocked Teacher Liu and left her speechless. ‘He told me what his father earns in a month is more than what I earn in a year’, Teacher Liu told me, ‘so he said what was the point of studying hard and go to university like I did? He would do just fine like his parents’.

Most of Teacher Liu’s students came from families of peasant or migrant workers and she found that parents did not have time, or energy, or in some cases, intentions to educate their own children. ‘It is exactly these children I am worried about’, she told me, ‘I just do not know how to make them realize the importance of knowledge

and importance of we are learning here. But the problem is that even I cannot sort that logic straight yet’.

Teacher Liu was upset when she was not giving the opportunity to participate in a teaching competition and she pointed out that the selection process was not transparent. The teacher chosen to compete was a relative of a member of the school management team and Teacher Liu did not consider that teacher to be more competent than herself.

Teacher Fu, in the second semester, continued to focus on improving subject knowledge learning and teaching and instruction methods. He had always been confident about his subject knowledge and this time he put work into developing his instruction skills: ‘(professional learning activities were) Mostly about classroom teaching, like our teaching and research section weekly meetings, or feedback session after class observation, or teaching competition, including the competition I participated last time. They were all about classroom teaching, such as lesson plan and classroom activity design. Also we have discussions of how new curriculum standard should be understood and we learn about the theories and ideas behind it. But it would always come down to practice as how classroom teaching should change according to the new curriculum standard’.

Teacher Fu rightly pointed out that: ‘you teach learning methods rather than facts and you teach them how to deal with practical problems. But I feel that there something more practical to think about. You do not feel so strongly when you are teaching lower grades, but in the senior year when you are facing high school entrance exams, who cares about methods or facts. But history teachers may not feel so strongly about that because history is not one of the major subjects to be tested, plus I am only teaching the junior one at the moment’.

When asked how his professional learning experience impacted on his perception of the teaching profession, he told me:

I always have the feeling that there is no limit in the universe. Sometimes I feel that I am delivering some great teaching, but then I can always find

some better teacher who teaches better. Some teachers just have it, the natural charisma. They have a great sense of humour and they say things that are meaningful. They are very knowledgeable about literature and history. They do not need to prepare and memorize before hand and all these things are just kept in their mind. Therefore, I think education is very important for teachers, so is charisma, which is something you are born with. The other thing is that learning never ends. If you work on each lesson carefully, you can always improve it and add something innovative to it. It is just that sometimes I feel I do not have enough time.

7.2.2. Routines and Practical Knowledge

Tickle (2000) notes that the fact that the question of induction usually hinges on the nature of what teachers have to know and be able to do is understandable as beginning teachers do experience severe disruptions that come with the shift from being a student to a full-time teacher. A very helpful characterization of the discontinuity between pre-service education and the induction year is given by Tickle (2000: 23):

- The shift in status;
- Tension between expected professional performance and learning on the job;
- Change of location;
- The fullness and complexity of new responsibilities;
- New school situation and organizational features;
- Handling different curriculum content;
- Getting to know resources;
- Strangeness of new colleagues;
- Meeting many young people who have suddenly become significant in one's life;
- Isolation from other novices as soulmates;
- Facing aspects of teaching which were never dealt with in training;

The above challenges urge beginning teachers to familiar themselves with the 'administrative, organizational, managerial, collegial, legal and traditional aspects' of teaching and school life (Tickle, 2000: 37). These aspects were also acknowledged by participants of my study which are associated with the search for safety and

belongings (Maslow, 1968). What beginning teachers acquire concerning the above aspects should not be considered as lower level of knowledge but as primary and fundamental knowledge in helping new teachers to function with 'dignity and a sense of order and stability' (Tickle, 2000: 37). The significance of practice knowledge has also been noted by authors such as Elbaz (1983) and Connelly and Clandinin (1985).

Connelly and Clandinin (1985) define personal practical knowledge as the sum total of the teacher's experience which incorporates past experiences, present mind and body, and future plans and aspirations. This definition is consistent with Schubert and Ayers (1992) who highlight the feelings and understandings of teachers as important elements of teachers' practical knowledge. Elbaz (1983) puts an emphasis on the distinctive ways with which teachers use the acquired knowledge in their practice and takes this idea further by identifying five categories of practical knowledge that are essential for beginning teachers which include knowledge of self, knowledge of environment, knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of curriculum and knowledge of instruction.

Same as the participants of my study, Shulman (1986) and Wilson, Shulman and Richert's (1987) studies of student teachers' understanding of teaching in the US note the importance beginning teachers attach to learning and relearning subject matter in order to teach it to students. Moreover, Shulman (1986) also highlights the importance of getting to know pupils and their abilities and expectations so that beginning teachers could gain more practical knowledge in terms of applying different strategies to children with different needs.

The difficulty in acquiring practical knowledge, argues Polanyi (1962), lies in the fact that practical knowledge emerges from a personal interaction with reality and the clash between personal assumption and theories and practice. The personal and tacit nature of experience makes it difficult for teachers to verbalize or articulate what they have learnt. This is consistent with Schon's (1983) notion of reflection-in-action which suggests that practical knowledge and tacit knowledge can be acquired in

action. According to Schon (1983), reflective practice includes the concept of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The latter occurs upon the completion of a task while the former occurs more spontaneously as practitioners improvise. Schon urges practitioners to be attentive and alert to their own actions and judgments in order to internalize the practical knowledge gained through action.

In terms of how practical knowledge can be acquired, Elbaz (1983) and Tickle (2002) both highlight the personal experiences and beliefs as a source for personal practical knowledge and applicable disciplines, professional culture and collaborative practice as a source for collaborative practical knowledge. The understanding of difference sources for practical knowledge recognizes the instability and contestability of the elements of environment which beginning teachers need to be inducted into. Moreover, Connelly and Clandinin (1988) and Tickle (2002) all state the importance for beginning teachers to take responsibilities for their own learning and development for the reason that practical knowledge is a term designed to capture the capacity with which beginning teachers are able to make sense of their prior and current situations and become knowledgeable and knowing persons.

What also comes into play is what Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon (1996) describe as a producer-user perspective of knowledge which is associated with the technical conception of teaching mentioned previously that emphasizes the importance of scientific methods to teach as formal knowledge (Fenstermacher, 1994). Teachers are viewed as passive recipients of scientific knowledge which, argue Goodlad, et al. (1974), causes concern over the lack of fidelity between what the knowledge produces intend and the way teachers implement it. The inadequacies of this approach have been discussed before. However, it is important to note that practical knowledge is the product of the interaction between the so-called scientific or formal knowledge, personal practical knowledge, and the contexts. The curriculum reform put forward by policy makers and the scientific methods for school management reflected in school administration regulations, for instance, all contribute to the complexity of beginning teachers' lives as to what should be considered as good teaching practice. This is why Shulman (1986) highlights the recognition of teachers'

assumptions and beliefs as these beliefs are not fixed or invariant and external restraints do have impact on teachers' perceptions and attitudes.

However, personal experiences and beliefs as a source of practical knowledge can also have negative impact on teachers as Connelly and Clandinin (1988) point out that teachers may not be able to see what is happening in the classroom for the reason that teachers' framework for understanding is largely influenced by their lived experiences and theoretical orientations. Therefore, the subjective understandings may affect, either positively or negatively, teachers' interaction with students and teachers' attitudes towards teaching specific subject or fixed textbooks. The implication of this argument is that teachers need to develop a sense of professional self-concept through reflective practice (Schon, 1983) or study of personal narratives (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988).

This section, therefore, utilizes the narrative tool to explore what beginning teachers in my study considered to be essential and important when they first started teaching and the process in which they kept on gaining new practical knowledge as they progressed to the later stage of the induction year. This section also aims to be attentive to participants' perceptions and attitudes towards the applicable administrative regulations, classroom management and instructional techniques and other more tacit type of knowledge.

7.2.2.1 Phase One Interviews

Always wanted to be teacher, history teacher Zhou from School E was not anxious about being a teacher. But she was concerned with whether she was acting appropriately in front of her students. 'I am always focused when I observe my mentor in the classroom', Teacher Zhou told me, 'what should I do when students are chatting in the classroom, what should I do when students ask me something that I don't know, what should I do when I realize that only some students understand the class content and others don't. I am just worried that I might be harming my students by not doing these little things right'.

Teacher Zhou went to her tutoring session with her mentoring teacher well-prepared. 'I usually take detailed notes of her feedback on my lesson plans, word by word', Teacher Zhou said to me, 'I feel like that I need to write down everything I am going to say in the classroom so that I myself would not get lost'.

For the first few weeks, Teacher Zhou was trying to be 'invisible' during the weekly teaching and research section meetings. 'Since I am only a young and new teacher, I don't know the way I should be speaking in front all these senior teachers,' Teacher Zhou said, 'So I suppose the best policy is to be silent first and observe how they others talk'. However, Teacher Zhou admired some other beginning teachers in her group who 'have the guts' to speak out and put forward their opinions during the meetings. 'I am worried that I might make mistakes', she continued, 'I am more worried that other teachers might think what I says has no value or importance'.

Music teacher Ma from School G told me: 'When I was in high school, no one paid attention in music lessons...I suppose I should not be surprised that my students are not concentrating in my classroom. I guess now I really understand what my music teacher back in high school really felt'. Teacher Ma was struggling to maintain classroom orders. 'What I imagined about music lesson is that it should be interactive and students should be enjoying it', she told me, 'but it is really difficult to be strict and fun at the same time. It is just really difficult, for example, to find a piece of music that everyone enjoys. When the students don't like the music, their minds just wonder off somewhere else, or worse, they start disturbing those who are actually interested'. She continued, 'but when you do take control, you can see students get quiet because they are afraid of you rather than they want to learn, which does not make me feel better at all'.

Chinese teacher Zhang from School G had similar but slightly different concerns. 'I am very strict in my classroom and I look very serious', she told me, 'my students really scared of me at first, especially when I raise my voice. But this is not a long-term strategy. I think I need to earn my respect from my students for the reason that they think I am an authoritative figure because of my academic knowledge'.

Teacher Zhang worked really hard in preparing her lesson plans. ‘Chinese teachers teach lessons every day, so we have a huge workload of preparation to do’, she told me, ‘but I feel like I have to gain deeper understanding of each piece of literature even though I have already learnt them before and I have discussed the lesson plans with my mentor’. She continued, ‘Chinese literature is beautiful but abstract. You can always find different ways to interpret them or different angles to teach. I want to do them justice’. ‘But sometimes I am loving it too much’, she explained, ‘reciting a piece of poem or prose can be a beautiful too and sometimes I spent too much time simply asking my students to read them out loud to enjoy the rhyme of Chinese language; and then I realized that I did not have enough time to finish the lesson. You know students really do not like teachers who keep them in the classroom after the class is over’.

7.2.2.2. Phase Two Interviews

Coming to the second semester, Teacher Zhou described her daily life as ‘regulated and routined’. ‘I seem to have a habit of setting up rules and follow them’, Teacher Zhou said to me, ‘it is like the ‘one line across three points’ life we used to live as students that everyday life seemed to be starting from my house to classroom and back to my house again’. Teacher Zhou followed her routines for work closely: ‘I have a set of habits that I like to do including the format of my lesson plan, the things I need to discuss with my mentor, the points to remember during the weekly meetings, and the objectives I need to achieve in every lesson’.

‘My task lists make me feel relaxed and secure as I know if I am doing alright if I complete them’, she said. Teacher Zhou felt that she was content and happy with what she was doing: ‘my students seem to like me a lot and they think that I look more like their sister rather than their teacher...I am comfortable with my work and teaching style and I have established very good relationships with my colleagues’. Nevertheless, Teacher Zhou were still nervous to speak during the weekly teaching and research section meetings: ‘Sometimes I only speak when our group leader calls out my name and ask for my opinion or when my mentor says that I have a good idea

and ask me to explain. Other than that, I still prefer to listen as I can always learn from the other more than they can learn from me I think’.

Teacher Ma was disappointed by the status of music teachers and the music subject. ‘It is a optional course and students don’t have music lessons in their second year’, she told me, ‘you might think that they would cherish the music lessons now’. Like her mentoring teacher, Teacher Ma changed her focus on school activities instead of the music lessons. ‘All the students selected to participate in school dancing or singing competitions are usually those who have received trainings in music and who are actually interested in music’, she said to me, ‘working with them make me feel valuable and make me feel that what I do is fruitful when I see them performing on stage’. As to her music lessons, Teacher Ma was used to the fact that she needed to give up her lessons when key exam subject teachers asked her to and she understood that students might need a bit of time to ‘relax or simply chat’ and her classroom would be the ‘perfect place to do so’. ‘Sometimes you have to feel sympathetic for these students,’ she said to me, ‘the competition is so fierce and you just want them to have a rest whenever they can’.

Teacher Zhang could not take the same approach as Teacher Ma as Chinese was one of the key exam subjects. ‘I like to do what I used to do as a student’, she told me, ‘and every other morning is Chinese reading session. I usually use this period of time to check if my students could recite the required poems or prose. I also ask a different student to give her/his interpretation of the literature learnt the day before and ask other students to raise questions’. Teacher Ma kept working hard on preparing for her lessons. She found demonstration lessons from other experts in Chinese teaching really helpful. ‘I bought a lot of recorded teaching session from experts in high schools in Beijing and I also went to demonstration lessons whenever I can,’ she told me, ‘I just really enjoy the feeling of being inspired when I hear some interpretations that are different from my own. And I hope my students could have the same feelings when they are in my classes.

Nevertheless, Teacher Zhang encountered more troubles outside the Chinese classrooms. She took on the assistant class director role in the second semester which was one of the goals she set for herself. ‘You can never say you are a teacher until you work as a class director. Everyone says that,’ she told me, ‘but it is difficult in a sense that the charm of my knowledge in Chinese literature does not work so well as a class director’. She explained: ‘being a class director, I need to be tentative to a lot of personal matters of my students such as their performance in other classes, their attendance and reason for absence, their appearances, and even their personal relationships. I guess I just don’t know how to make them understand why it is important to cut their hair short and wear school uniforms when they were in school or why it is important to focus on study rather than getting a girl/boy friend’.

7.2.3. Pedagogical Perspectives

Teachers are required to be able to translate their expertise in a way that it is accessible to pupils with different abilities and needs. Schulman (1986) points out that it refers to teachers’ ability in transforming subject knowledge into what he terms as *pedagogical content*. Behaviourist approaches to teaching were very popular in the 20th century in China which, in Tickle’s (2002: 42) terms, adopt a ‘corrupted version’ of such educational practice in which teachers merely assist in the transmission of prescribed knowledge and skills while assessment as an objective measurement of the learners’ ability are highlighted as essential to ensure quality of education and competence of students. University education also adopts what Lave and Wenger (2000) describe as a master-apprentice concept with lecturers and tutors being the experts and students being the learners.

The new curriculum reform in China advocates a constructivist approach inspired by Dewey’s notion of inquiry teaching and learning (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996). There are signs of growing demand in student-teacher interaction in the curriculum which signifies the change of teaching methods from teacher monologue and repetition of knowledge to dialogue between teachers and students (Lave and Wenger, 1998). The paradox for teachers, however, is the fact that even though the curriculum reform recognizes learning as a socially and culturally situated activity and it has made

according requirements to the roles of the learner and the teacher, but it does not fully accept constructivist conception of knowledge as socially determined and constructed. Another challenge facing beginning teachers is that, even though curriculum reform lays out new theoretical orientations and instructions for basic education, university education or pre-service education continues to use the master-apprentice approach (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996).

It is not my intention in this section to explore the concept of constructivism and its application to curriculum reform in China. Rather, this section is primarily concerned with the development of teachers' perspectives with respect to aspects of pedagogy. The term pedagogy can be understood in simplified terms as the principles and methods of teaching with which teachers carry out teaching and learning activities with students (Tickle, 2001). Tickle (2001) points out that, in a more complex view of teaching, pedagogy should also be concerned with the tensions within society's knowledge creation, the purposes of schooling, and what teachers are responsible for. In other words, pedagogy includes not only teacher behaviour in the classroom, but also the implicit assumptions and intentions which lie behind teachers' actions. Another dimension to pedagogical content, according to Tickle (2001), is that teachers should not only be commander of subject knowledge, they should also be involved in the discussion as to the nature and purposes of schooling and what is worth teaching with respect to 'real knowledge and school knowledge' (43). Moreover, Calderhead and Shorrock (1997: 14) highlight the moral dimension to pedagogy as they argue that teaching involves caring for young people, considering the interests of children, preparing them to be part of a future society, and influencing the way in which they relate to each other and live. In addition, Valli (1990) adds concerns for equality and equity of education and schooling to the list of responsibilities for teachers. Lyons' (1990) study with secondary school teachers suggest that the sense of personal mission involved in teaching practice and the values held by teachers might be in contradiction with what is prescribed to be the best way to teach, and therefore creates moral dilemmas.

Pedagogical perspectives are, of course, shaped by a set of beliefs and ideas concerning teaching and education educational ideologies. More importantly, perspectives are partially derived from what Schutz (1972) has called 'recipe knowledge', that is, the everyday, commonsense knowledge which emerges indiscriminately through the pressure of social constraints, and which is applied automatically. Pedagogical knowledge particularly is of this kind of pedagogical perspectives, like the teacher perspective of which they are a part, develop throughout the process of teacher socialization. This means that they will be influenced not only by the pedagogies of tutors and mentoring teachers on school experiences but also the pedagogies of teachers from student teachers' own school careers. Moreover, the pedagogical cultures of the training institution and of the schools in which students are placed will also exert subtle influence. It must, however, be emphasized that pedagogy is a social construction and teachers do not simply draw on pedagogies which exist independently of them (Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997; Tickle 2002).

Pedagogy is an active construction derived from the application of assumptions and meanings to a concrete classroom situation the socially constructed solution to the reality of classroom life. The concern, then, is with subjective dimensions of pedagogy, that is, how teachers think of their classroom tasks and relationships, and how they come to structure teaching situations in particular ways. In short, the sets of understandings and frames of reference which are fundamental to the ways in which teachers perform in the classroom. Every teacher approaches the daily interaction of the classroom with particular assumptions and schemes of interpretation. These contain the relevance structures by which he/she judges the meaning of classroom phenomena and by which he/she is prompted to act in certain ways (Esland, 1977:15). In this sense, teachers' sense of pedagogical perspectives can also be vulnerable in the relational context in interaction with the different values, beliefs and expectations of principals, parents and students. The educational policy changes and reforms can also create unease and undermine teachers' self-confidence as their traditional ways of practicing being challenged (Gordon, 2005).

The self-image of teachers in my study as described in the previous chapter, whether it was developed prior to becoming a teacher or during the induction year, brought to attention to the extent to which beginning teachers were able to relate to their own missions and beliefs and the current situation. Just as positive images impacted on student teachers' beliefs, negative images worked in positive ways too. The images were a stable source of reference through which ideas of teacher practices were filtered and reshaped. They help beginning teachers to form assumptions on which they based their practice. These images also help me in exploring teachers' pedagogical perspectives as images can be conserved as a personal, meta-level organization of personal experiences and practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1986: 166). The construction of teacher self-images did not appear to be a stable or a passive process as beginning teachers also rely on new experiences and events and new relationships with students and the wider school community. The evolving formulations did not replace existing images but instead appeared to add other dimensions to them with respect to teachers' evolving job motivations. This section, therefore, aims to explore teachers' pedagogical perspectives based on the analysis of teachers' job motivation and self-images with reference to their own conception as learners and the practical knowledge they acquired.

7.2.3.1 Phase One Interviews

History teacher Fu from School D considered himself to possess some of the qualities required to be a teacher. 'I am a man with principles, such as treat people the way you want to be treated', he told me, 'People should have self-awareness, they should be aware of their advantages and shortcomings. I try to be a man with good will. But of course I have shortcomings, sometimes I am lack of patience, and I give up too soon'. He was sensitive towards other people's behaviour, especially those of his previous teachers. 'if a teacher has bad habits, or personality defects, and if a sensitive child realized, (these things) definitely will have influence on this child' he said to me, 'for example, when I was in junior secondary school, there was this teacher, (who) had questionable life style. He smoked, drank and gambled. He also had family problem, and he used dirty words a lot. At that time we despised that

teacher. But no big negative influence on us. Because we knew it was bad, so we would go that way’.

For Teacher Fu, the principles of being a teacher were the same with being a decent man who was ‘honest and trustworthy’, just like what his parents taught him to be, as he commented, ‘teachers need to set examples and be models for their students...actually it means we need to be ourselves, each person is unique’.

Learning history for Teacher Fu was really enjoyable; teaching history, however, was difficult. ‘It basically is to propagate doctrines and to impart knowledge. Rarely do we dispel doubts; the students don’t really have questions in history class, and sometimes they are not concentrated’, he told me, ‘...rarely could I be friends with students. I teach 7 classes, about 400 students. I could not even remember all their names’. Nevertheless, Teacher Fu felt comfortable fulfilling the role of ‘propagating doctrines and imparting knowledge’. ‘I am very self-directed. Regarding the teaching methods, I like to have my own style’, he told me, ‘many teachers who had observed my class found the same problem, that I don’t interact with the students much’. He further explained:

The questions I have in mind, are too difficult for my students to answer with their current knowledge base. But on the other hand, if the questions are too easy, I feel like it is an insult to myself. The things I learnt in university and graduate school are way too difficult for junior secondary school students. Guidance is necessary, but it needs time and I have teaching tasks to finish. Now when I teach classes, I stuck in this so-called traditional teaching model of teacher autocracy. I drilled all these information into their heads. I am still trying to figure my way out. I am trying to figure out what questions to ask, how to interact with students.

Teacher Fu received help from his mentor and other colleagues. But as he commented: ‘my mentor would look at my lesson plans and give me suggestions. And other teachers who observed my classes also gave me suggestions. But at the end of the day it is still my problem, I am aware of that. I am very confused by this student-centredness. It is just a very theoretical concept’.

The kind of teaching method Teacher Fu usually adopted was in a way teacher-centred as he described: ‘I want to make my history class a story-telling class, like *Pingshu* (Story-telling of Chinese history events or folk stories) and *Xiangsheng* (comedy dialogue), that students would love to hear. It is more like me’ and ‘for example, when I was teaching about Ming and Qing dynasty, I would talk about how Jing Yong incorporated the historical events and background into his novels. Also when I was teaching about the period of the three kingdoms, I would use The Records of Three Kingdoms and The Tale of Three Kingdoms as different versions of the story’.

Art teacher Feng from School C also believed that ‘to become a decent teacher one needed to be decent human being first’. She came into the profession with clear image of the type of teacher that she would like to become. ‘I am going to be the kind of teacher who respects the student who for she is’, Teacher Feng said, ‘I want to make all my pupils feel loved’. Teacher Feng was motivated by her early schooling experience where she felt she was being treated unfairly by her high school director for being different and straightforward with her opinions. ‘she always picked on me,’ Teacher Feng told me, ‘I tended to speak out what was on my mind and I always talked back when I was criticised’. However, the outspoken nature and straightforwardness was what Teacher Feng considered to be her best qualities and she intended to keep being herself as a teacher too.

Maybe due to the nature of art teaching or her experience of helping her art tutor with younger children when she was a student, Teacher Feng was less concerned with classroom teaching and lesson plans comparing to other beginning teachers. For Teacher Feng, the most important quality of being a art teacher is the tacit knowledge of painting. As she commented, ‘I am able to show them some of the great techniques in class. But if you do not know how to do it yourself, you cannot fake it’. This was one of the benefits of getting into a prestigious university as Teacher Feng did: ‘I guess this is why having the opportunity to be taught by some of the best painters is such an important experience for me because lots of the techniques and observation skills in painting cannot be learnt through merely instructions’.

And she wanted her students to be able to have that experience as well. 'I did not get into a great university art programme solely because of my painting skills,' she told me, 'this is one of the things I have tried to get across to my students'. However, she was somehow disappointed by the extreme passion for art exams and the indifference to other subjects displayed by her students. 'I blame the exam system,' said Teacher Feng.

2.3.2 Phase Two Interviews

Coming to the second semester, Teacher Fu had even better vocabulary in describing the qualities of teachers expected from the school which was that teachers should possess 'ethics, knowledge, methods and fortune'. He further explained:

I think it is right. Ethics means teachers should act like teachers. They should have compassion for their students and have a sense of purpose which is to be responsible for their students. Knowledge is very obvious. Methods means a good teacher should know how to let his/her students to learn happily and grow happily. I think I am able to help my students learn and grow happily, but I can not guarantee to help them take exams happily and still be happy after they get the results...And fortune means teachers should possess some kind of spiritual fortune. In plain words, teachers are not well-paid so they may never possess materials and at least they should possess some spiritual ones to keep on with their lives.

In Teacher Fu's own opinion, patience is the most essential quality of being a teacher. He told me:

First of all you need to be patient with your life. You need to be able to tolerate doing the same thing everyday which is basically teaching and marking, and also facing the same students and same colleagues. Secondly, you need to be patient with students when they make mistakes...you may not be able to remember those kids who are very self-regulated. Rather you remember those who are very naughty, those who do not finish homework, and those who get really bad grades. Moreover, you need to be patient with yourself. Yes the teaching profession is very stable, but you are still a teacher after ten years, and you are still a teacher after twenty years. Unlike working as civil servants, you get promoted one level follow another.

Teacher Fu had also given considerable thought to what should be the best way to teach history. 'I agree that the history subject should focus more on the emotion aspect of teaching, such as love for our country and our nation, love for history in general', he told me, 'but these kids are still young, they need to accumulate knowledge at this stage because emotions cannot be derived from the historical facts'. He continued: 'I guess this is why I like to give lectures and to tell stories. I like to tell stories myself before asking my students to do explorative study on different topics'.

Therefore, Teacher Fu endeavoured to work on his instruction skills to be more innovative and exciting. 'I still like telling stories. It is history after all. I like to ask them to do a drama performance based on a historical event which is more useful than memorizing chronological list', he told me. He understood that 'teaching history also means teaching the methods of learning history, for example, from illustrating, knowing, and telling, to summarising, understanding, and concluding, to comparing, discussing and evaluating'. However, he argued that 'it takes time for children to learn how to study history using this method' and 'that it does not mean that memorizing facts is wrong'. He explained: 'I think as Chinese, as an educated person, one should keep some basic common sense, like knowledge of history, in mind and should be able to use it whenever one needs without having to go back to books'.

Teacher Feng kept her word that she would like to be herself when she became a teacher. However, her straightforwardness seemed to get her in trouble again. 'I just heard teachers kept talking about how they cared about every child in their classroom. But I knew it was not true for some teachers,' Teacher Feng told me, 'I just do not think they should say things that they do not mean or did not do'. Despite being describe as 'uptight and vain', Teacher Feng decided to accept her mentor's advice that it was to justify her positions with good judgement and her own action instead of 'harsh words and attitudes'.

Teacher Feng described what art students were doing was ‘doing art for the wrong reason’. ‘One of the suggestions from my mentor is that I need to focus more on my students’ ability to apprehend very quickly what the tests given by examiners are designed for’, she disagreed with but understood where her mentor was coming from as she commented, ‘even though I think art education is not about these exams at all, I know it is very crucial for them to know that in order to get into a great programme.’ She continued: ‘It is not just teaching art anymore. It is all about speculating what topics each university examination committee will come up with. There is no fun in that since students need to come up with ideas that are different, not because they are original or creative, but because they could stand out from all the competitors’.

Therefore, Teacher Feng still held on to the hope to recreate the harmonious picture of her and her tutor painting the sunset in the countryside. However, Teacher Feng felt that her image of a liberal teacher who treated every student with love and no bias was very difficult to realise. She had firsthand experience of dealing with behaviour problems which actually enabled her to put herself in her former high school class director’s shoes. ‘I completely embrace the ways of thinking that communication between teachers and students should be based on the premise that they were equal partners. The equal partnership should be reflected in the process of teaching and learning in a sense that teachers and students’ perceptions and opinions should both be respected and considered to be valuable’, she said to me, ‘but sometimes you just cannot apply this principle literally because students sometimes are too young to know what is good for them’. Nevertheless, Teacher Feng expressed that she would keep on working to find a better way to communicate with ‘troubled students’.

7.3. Summary and Discussion

At this stage of the analysis, further interpretations were made relating to the beliefs these beginning teachers may have about themselves as teachers and the teaching profession. This hopefully builds on earlier chapters of my thesis as my intention was to offer in this chapter another perspective, with greater depth, that helps to

triangulate the other two themes that have already emerged. More specifically, the narratives presented in this chapter attempted to explore the perceptions of the beginning teachers in my study concerning their notions of being a learner, notions of the knowledge that they considered to be essential at this early stage of their career, and their understanding of their pupils and the purpose of teaching and learning so as to form a more cohesive interpretation of teachers' complex process of professional identity construction in their first year of teaching along with teachers' motivation and self-images as discussed in earlier chapters.

Reflecting on my participating teachers' narratives, I felt that there were three identity resources for the development of prior beliefs and perceptions and for their meaning making. Firstly, teachers' own learning experiences and the values they attached to their learning were related closely to how teachers talked about their work and their students. Secondly, it was related to individual teachers' perceptions about the knowledge a teacher needed to have. These perceptions, however, were shaped and reshaped by a number of different influences such as formative learning experiences, model teachers, teacher education or work experiences. Thirdly, how teachers believed what the educational system or the wider society were required of from their students also had great impact on these teachers' pedagogical beliefs.

These prior beliefs and perceptions exhibited about teaching by participating beginning teachers were continuously reshaped by three common influences. Firstly, beginning teachers all cited examples of teachers they encountered during their schooling years who had inspired them or whose teaching style or ethics they did not agree with or respect. These influences, at least during the very first of year of teaching as researched in my study, proved to be having a stable impact on these teachers. Secondly, beginning teachers' perceptions were also influenced by their mentors or colleagues, with whom they developed relationships. My participating teachers all discussed themselves in relation to the others in the workplace. Most participants had a positive relationship with the mentors, but not necessarily an affinity with the mentors' views of teaching or methodologies of teaching. But the evidence suggested that, even though these beginning teachers might not attempt to

become the same type of teachers their mentors were, they made effort to incorporate what they considered to be the good practice of the mentors and colleagues into their own teaching styles. Thirdly, this first year of working helped beginning teachers clarify or develop their prior perceptions and beliefs. For example, Teacher Fu's initial confusion or even rejection to the concept of 'student-centred teaching' in the beginning of the first year was replaced by his acknowledgement of some of the advantages of such concept on teaching history; Teacher Xie's endeavor to be a liberal teacher of free expression gave way to increased concern with students' disciplines and learning.

It is interesting to see that teachers did not hold the same opinion to the value of learning; however, they appeared to be sharing similar, instrumental if appropriate, understanding about their students as to what these pupils needed to get out of the current schooling system. It also appeared that teachers' understandings were influenced by the literature offered by either teacher education or other resources that legitimated one particular teaching methodology or one particular notion of teaching such as 'student-centred teaching'. These different or shared/common understandings held by beginning teachers, in my opinion, are in a way related to what Wenger (1998) suggests as the dual process of identity formation. The concept of community is relevant here as Wenger (1998: 188) argues that identity formation of an individual in a particular community has to do with the characteristics of the said community as well as his/her ability to shape the meanings that define these communities, hence 'participation and non-participation' in his terms.

Where I find Wenger's (1998) notion useful is the theoretical framework of identity formation he develops which entails a dual process of identification and negotiability which in a way supports my findings. By identification, he refers to the process in which identities are developed with experiences and available materials as the self invests to build associations and differentiations. Wenger (1998: 192) points out that identification should not be understood as solely in relational terms with people, but also with 'the constituents of their social existence including other participants, social configurations, categories, enterprises, actions, artifacts, and so forth', a

definition that obviously goes beyond what my research findings could entail. Nevertheless, his three modes of belongings, namely engagement, imagination, and alignment, as the resources of identification could be useful in explaining the general trends I summarized at the beginning of this discussion section.

First of all, engagement involves investment, in my case, in what teachers do as well as in teachers' relationships with others in the communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). Hence, it is through exploring the extent to which individual teachers could relate to others in perception and the extent to which individuals teachers find themselves willing to/having the competency to engage in practice that the construction of identity initiates. This was evident in my participants' narratives concerning how they viewed themselves as teachers in relation to their mentors or colleagues, and then reflected on or even adjusted to what they perceived to be preferable ways of teaching or behaving.

Secondly, imagination goes beyond engagement in practice or ways of thinking and involves the connections to the wider world view across history and social landscape (Wenger, 1998). As Wenger (1998: 177) argues, imagination can work by both 'association' and 'opposition', thus defining identities both by connecting or disconnecting with the context. Hence, it is argued to be less realistic comparing to identification through engagement in a sense that, when practice is not fully understood or principles are made overly-generalized, imagination could become stereotyping (Wenger, 1998). In my understanding this could support how prior perceptions of beginning teachers in my study were challenged as they encountered specific issues in classrooms and how vague concept such as educational theories beginning teachers acquired at teacher education stage were wiped out as they were unable to connect them to real classroom practice. The lack of verbal definition of concepts or images produced by the process of imagination might results in a lack of understanding of the prescribed approaches to teaching brought forward by educational changes such as curriculum reform. But as Wenger (1998) argues, this process could work with engagement, or in my case, the process of apprenticeship in

teaching as achieved in the mentoring relationships to promote understanding based on experiential learning.

Thirdly, alignment refers to the process of ‘going along’, either willingly or submissively, during which participants in a community connect to the identity of a larger group. Wenger (1998) points out that alignment involves power and therefore it is often achieved through a complex interplay of compliance and allegiance, a process that is similar to what Lacey (1977) terms as ‘strategic compliance’ and ‘internalized adjustment’ (72). This process, however, entails broader or more specific issues. For example, my participants could conform to departmental regulations or a particular method of teaching due to the pressure of the workplace or as a result of positive alignment; or they could disagree with the wider principles such as the value or the purpose of schooling that promoted by the current schooling system or the society.

At this point of alignment is where negotiability comes into play. Negotiability refers to the negotiation of meaning produced or defined by the above three processes of identification (Wenger, 1998). I think that this process of negotiation highlights the view of teachers as possessors of qualities and capabilities beyond technical and clinical proficiency (Tickle, 2000: 93). As Tickle (2000: 93) argues, the theoretical constructs of teachers’ knowledge or beliefs, with which the conception of knowledge as ‘truth’ or as a social construct (Op’t Eynde, De Corte, & Verschaffel, 2002) and the relationship between instructional technician and reflective practitioner should be considered, can be extended through a view of actions in the form of social strategies. ‘Long before they enroll in their first education course or math methods course, they have developed a web of interconnected ideas about mathematics, about teaching and learning mathematics, and about schools’ (Ball, 1988). Taking Ball’s (1988) comments on mathematics teachers for example, it is these beliefs that often form the foundation on which beginning teachers could further develop their practice and beliefs (Millsaps, 2000; Unsimaki and Nason, 2004). The negotiation of meaning, therefore, occurs continuously through different stages or modes of identification.

To borrow the argument concerning the difference between objective forms of knowledge and subjective knowledge, as Leatham (2006) nicely puts, ‘of all the things we believe, there are some things that we just believe and other things we more than believe – we know. Those things we more than believe we refer to as knowledge and those things we just believe we refer to as beliefs. Thus beliefs and knowledge can profitably be viewed as complementary subsets of the things we believe (9)’. My point here is that, despite the philosophical argument between objectivity and subjectivity, individual’s actions operate based more on the knowledge as an individual construct. That is to say, their processes of negotiation of meaning are more likely to be operated within what they believe to be true or right rather than what may actually be true even if this ultimate truth does exist. Therefore, it is important to include subjective educational theory of teachers in the discussion of teacher learning and development. However, it is not to say that the external influence of power and structure should be neglected. As Wenger (1998) points out, identity formation is always an on-going process of identification and negotiation of meaning where internal and external struggles take place.

The usefulness of Wenger’s (1998) framework lies in the way it helps me making sense of my own interpretation. First of all, the process of identification incorporates issues of the self that is both personal and social in a sense that it allows wider issues of social and economic inequalities beyond the actual site of learning to be revealed. For example, it could involve discussion about how my participants’ family background may influence their pre-conception of learning and the value attached to learning could be included in the discussion; and how my participants reacted to the different access to the quality of learning experiences possessed by students from rural or urban areas. Secondly, I think it is valuable that it does not focus solely on the difference between informal and formal forms of learning as the duality of the two concepts or the overemphasis of one concept could be too simplistic; rather it examines the workplace learning from a social participatory perspective where the social and personal aspects of identity formation and the struggle between agency and structure interact. Thirdly, it does echo findings from other researchers such as McNally (2006) and Day and Gu (2007) in agreeing that the construction of

professional identity is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted. The process of identification also highlights the relational sites in which identity formation takes place as was presented in my analysis.

However, this ‘relational’ dimension of identity construction as mentioned by McNally (2006) might need to be understood in a different manner in the Chinese context. Ho (1995), for example, also defines the self in Confucian cultures as ‘the relational self’ in a sense that Confucius teaches his students to be constantly aware of the social presence of other human beings. As Ho (1995) points out, Confucianism is, in its essence, an ethical regulation system that governs human relationships. For instance, Confucius’ teaching centres on five cardinal relationships: relationship between ruler and minister (or teacher and student), between father and son, between husband and wife, between brothers, and between friends.

In this sense, Ho (1995) suggests that this relational self is more related to the concept of collective identity, where individual identity is to be defined by membership in the reference group, the capability to match the attributes of the said group, and the extent to which he/she could fulfill the obligations and responsibilities of being a member. For beginning teachers, entering the teaching profession means to take on a set of roles assumed by educational authorities, by students and parents, by mentors and colleagues and by social expectations which, as Ho (1995) describes, implies a sense of role dominance. Therefore, the significance of the relational sites or the relationships lie not in a sense that they constantly reshape individual’s sense of identity in respecting individual’s perceptions, sentiments, or needs; rather, it emphasizes the proper conduct and the prescribed roles to be assumed by the individuals in a relationship between, for example, teachers and students.

If this is the case, then learning and being a learner in Confucian cultures might need to be understood differently too. As mentioned before, Confucius also encourages his students to take on the life-long journey of learning and self-cultivation. However, this concept of self-cultivation might be different from western humanistic concepts such as self-realization. Ho (1995) argues that, in Confucian doctrines, self-

cultivation is not to be perceived as an end in itself. Rather, it is considered as the desirable or even necessary conditions for social relationships to be regulated and harmonized. In other words, selfhood is realized when individuals are able to understand their positions in a society and in relationships, act accordingly to the prescribed ideals, and maintain the relationships in a harmonized manner.

As to my participants, Confucius' doctrines were constantly referenced as preferred ways of thinking about teaching or as a model of teaching to be challenged. For example, my participants mentioned that Confucius' pre-scribed roles for teachers might place teachers in a more teacher-centred position in the classroom as teachers are considered to be role models and authority. However, all of my participants agreed to the moral conduct and ethical implications of being a teacher which were also considered to be the most important elements of teacher education and training by LEA authorities, school principals and mentors, and beginning teachers.

One implication is that the intrinsic value placed on learning might entail different means and ends as compared to western thoughts. For example, Socrates (cited in Ho, 1995) argues that 'each individual has in his soul the power to learn and the appropriate means for learning, if only each one's soul has to take the appropriate direction' and 'virtue, through learning, experiencing and practicing, sets the soul free'. The notion of 'freeing one's soul' is to be compared with Confucius' commands which argues that one should 'cultivate himself, then regulate the family, then govern the state, and finally lead the world into peace (Analects, IV). It seems that Greek thinkers put the freedom of the soul as the fore while Confucian cultures concerns with individuals' places in society in relation to their significant others. As Ho (1995) argues, the danger of the latter ways of thinking lies in a sense that the conceptualization of prescribed role-identities might override individual personalities, experience and aspirations.

Even reflection takes on a different meaning in Confucius's teachings who suggests that 'self-reflection enhances your ability to conquer your own conflicts and weaknesses. It is the most important means to achieve a balanced mind within

oneself' and hence 'a balanced individual usually knows one's position in the community, is patient, is well-mannered, and respects others and self' (Analects, Cited in Li, 2002: 180). Beginning teachers in my study reported adaptations of these functions of reflection in their daily practice as they explicitly reflected on their conduct in the classroom or in the school and assessed the extent to which their behaviour matched the expectations. However, it was rare for them to challenge or reflect on the appropriateness of these expectations. In this sense, I agree with Calderhead and Robson (1991) who argue that, even though ideal images of teaching or preconceptions of teaching may have a long and endure impact on beginning teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001), the relational sites where teachers work should not be perceived as a harmonious place where learning towards prescribed ends occur. Rather, the relational sites should be place where teaching trajectories exist. This brings the attention to the personal engagement in a relational process again as Wenger's (1998) acknowledges in the process of learning.

The criticism of Wenger's (1998) framework lies mainly in the vague clarification of the concept of community and the conditions of learning since he separates the community of practice with the learning communities. Nevertheless, I agree with Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2004) who suggest that Wenger's (1998) framework works better in explaining newcomer's learning and identity formation process as the process of legitimate peripheral participation is considered to be valuable for developing a sense of belongings. However, they also argue that it might not work as effective in explaining that of experienced workers and hence compromising the claim of Wenger's framework to be an over-arching concept. It can also be argued that the Wenger (1998) defined the concept of communities of practice as relatively vague in a way that it could refer to the 'big claim' of a community that comprises 'a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 98); it could also refer to more tightly define communities, for example, school department as in empirical terms. At this stage I am curious about the usefulness of this general concept in further developing the understanding of teacher processional identity construction.

In summary, I named this chapter *Subjective Educational Theory* for the reason that I would like to assert that a personal vision of teaching is essential in understanding professional identity formation and beginning teacher development. Therefore, to understand such issues, it is necessary to understand the beliefs and values held about teaching and schooling. My study cannot validate how my participants' beliefs or perceptions were carried out in the classroom but it attempted to reveal the different and shared understanding of the teaching profession and professional teacher. My participants' conception of teaching and teachers usually contained qualities such as motivation and ethics that are difficult to measure. However, such dispositions have been identified as essential and integral to the process of identity formation of my participants. My attempt, therefore, was to locate teacher's narratives in different relational contexts so as to present the stories in the most original forms possible.

From this study it seemed that in some cases teachers' subjective beliefs held by my participants outweighed external standards or criteria, however, it is not to say that it is right to legitimize every belief and perception teachers hold. Rather, it is an attempt to acknowledge what Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) argue that 'no matter how pervasive particular aspects of a shared social occupational culture might be or how well individuals are socialised into it, the attitudes and actions of each teacher are rooted in their own ways of perceiving the world. One can effectively conclude that the self is a crucial factor in determining individual growth and receptivity to educational change'.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1. Overview

This study has been concerned with beginning teachers' perceptions of their induction experiences. It is a study informed mainly by theoretical themes and concepts in relation to professional identity and narrative studies in the western English language literature to explore the subjective perceptions and understandings as narrated by beginning teachers. The participants of this study consist of 23 beginning teachers in their first year of teaching from 7 secondary schools living and working in Yinchuan, China. Interviews that combined both narrative interview and topical interview elements were conducted at the beginning and the end of the school year. 17 principals/ principals/vice-principals/mentors and 6 LEA officials were also interviewed in understanding the support providers' perceptions.

This study was largely informed by Paine et al.'s (2003) study on new teacher induction in Shanghai, McNally's (2006) study on new teacher induction in Scotland, Day et al.'s (2005) study in teacher effectiveness in England, and Kelchtermans' (1993) study on teachers in Belgium. However, McNally and Day et al.'s studies were both extensive longitudinal studies which employed both quantitative and qualitative methods including survey, observation, interview, and action research and the research sites varied across different cities and regions in Scotland or England. Paine et al.'s study also utilised other qualitative methods including observation and group discussion. On the other hand, Day et al.'s (2005) and Kelchtermans' (1993) studies both focused on teachers at different career stages and age groups. This study only selected new teachers in their first year of teaching from secondary schools in one particular city in northwest China and only semi-structured interviews were conducted.

The research design of this study utilised the strengths of a narrative approach to give access to participants' subjective understanding of their own lived experiences. The analytical method, a voice-centred relational approach, also embraced the

interpretive framework of narrative studies and focused on teachers' narrated selves in a relational context in which they lived and worked.

The purpose of this conclusion is threefold. First, it serves to bring together the findings and unifying themes emerged in the analysis and discussion chapters to address the original research questions. Second, this chapter also reflects on the limitations of this study in relation to its methodology and methods, data collection and analysis, and its findings. Third, it attempts to raise issues concerning implications for teacher education and induction and suggestions for further research on beginning teachers.

8.2. Answers to Research Questions

8.2.1. Beginning Teacher Induction in Yinchuan City

This study first set to explore the system of induction in Yinchuan city by trying to understand the induction policy directives for beginning teachers through analyzing relevant support providers' perceptions of the policy and induction programmes. This section will try to address the first over-arching question concerning beginning teachers, and other participating support providers' perceptions of the induction programme.

One observable characteristic in the induction programmes in Yinchuan seen from the analysis of policy directives was that the induction activities for beginning teachers were incorporated into a continuous professional development plan and the first year of teaching was considered to be a phase in the teacher's developmental stages. Even though induction programmes were not implemented with the same level visibility or the same level of explicitness in terms of policy directives as in the UK, it is fair to say that induction in Yinchuan involved a varied process of learning and development activities that had been deeply embedded in its teaching practices.

The *2010-2014 Yinchuan Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training Plan* issued by Yinchuan Municipal Bureau of Education (2010) aims to address the behavioural characteristics of teachers at the early developmental stage and identifies

five broad areas of developmental needs of beginning teachers, namely, the capacity to be familiar with relevant educational law and regulations, to adapt to the real working situations using pedagogical and educational psychology theories, to comprehend the common practice and routines of teaching in one's subject area, to comprehend the textbooks and teaching materials, to develop and improve professional qualities and enhance one's faith and determination in devoting oneself to the teaching career.

The policy states that schools are primarily responsible to design and implement school-based induction activities complemented by short-term or one-off training opportunities provided by the LEA at municipal and provincial level. Apart from the emphasis on classroom teaching and the regulation concerning mentoring arrangement, the policy does not specify the details as to how these arrangements and activities should be implemented and the standard of programme design and implementation with regard to induction programme evaluations. The responsibility of evaluating these programmes and assessing beginning teachers' needs is also allocated to individual schools.

This could be considered as one of reasons why LEA officials' interpretation of the policy was different from that of school principals and mentoring teachers. LEA officials placed education law and regulations and professional ethics, education and pedagogical theory, and practical teaching and instructional skills at the centre of teacher induction; whereas school principals and mentoring teachers considered subject knowledge to be more important comparing to education and pedagogical theory.

Other possible explanations for the variance, as discussed in Chapter 4 which echo Paine, Fang and Wilson's (2003) study on beginning teacher induction in Shanghai, suggest that LEA and schools, although work towards common goals and shared understandings with respect to the purpose of schooling and the teaching profession, were allocated different responsibilities and therefore had different priorities. On the other hand, it can also be considered as the weakness of a top-down educational

reform effort where LEA officials endeavored to reinforce the pedagogical theories advocated by the new curriculum reform whereas school practices were still largely shaped by the unchanging exam culture. Also, since LEA officials in Yinchuan did not possess the same authority Shanghai had to develop its own municipality-wide or provincial-wide curriculum, schools were required to adopt the national standard curriculum and participate in national university entrance exams, the beginning teachers were then inducted in a teaching culture in which connections between the curriculum, exam subject knowledge and school practices were much tighter than that of Shanghai (Paine, Fang, and Wilson, 2003).

Beginning teachers had more context-specific and personal expectations from induction programmes as they expressed needs in learning about subject knowledge, student management, instructional skills, collegial relationships and interaction, pedagogical theories and knowledge of self. The common induction strategies experienced by beginning teachers are presented in Chapter 4. The findings supports other research findings in suggesting that the transition from being a student teacher to beginning teachers involves more than understanding subject knowledge and pedagogical principles and applying them. Most importantly, beginning teachers expressed the need to both have a clear sense of career directions for themselves and a well-planned induction service that could help them. However, my participants were genuinely disappointed in not having clearly stated policy directives with regard to their employment status and assessment requirements.

One point worth mentioning is that the formative assessment of beginning teachers was well incorporated into the observation and collaborative activities for beginning teachers. However, the findings could not reflect the summative assessment for beginning teachers as it had not taken place at the time of data collection. Another point is that both LEA officials, school principals and mentoring teachers acknowledged that close collaboration between schools, LEA, and other potential support providers could facilitate professional development of teachers which was reflected in their interviews concerning experts from LEA working together with experienced teachers in schools to offer feedback and suggestions based on

classroom observations. However, the participation at both LEA and other potential partners such as universities level was missing or reported to be very limited as suggested by participating beginning teachers.

The overall framework of the induction activities could be said to serve similar themes or objectives for beginning teachers as suggested by the findings from the interviews with different participants. However, analysis of interview data from beginning teachers, nevertheless, revealed important qualitative differences between individual teachers' experiences which were deeply context-specific and personal. Nevertheless, the findings highlight the capacity of mentoring arrangement to beginning teachers to provide the opportunity for them to adapt to and develop within the context of the subject department and the school. Mentoring teachers served as a teacher or guide for beginning teachers and their effort was recognised and appreciated by participating beginning teachers.

8.2.2. The First Year of Teaching

The second overarching research question set to explore the extent to which beginning teachers' perceptions of and attitudes toward themselves as teachers and professional learning change during their induction year. Drawing on multiple examples of teachers' narratives, the analysis chapters attempted to reveal how and sometimes why beginning teachers change within the first year of teaching by presenting the comparison between Phase One and Phase Two interviews. Based on a voice-centred relational approach to analysis, the findings highlighted three important themes, namely job motivation, self-image, and subjective educational theories, which were also presented in the form of a comparison between Phase One and Phase Two interviews in order to illustrate how beginning teachers' initial perspectives were changed, transformed, revisited, and in some cases, reinforced through observation, collaboration with other colleagues, and reflection.

This thesis, therefore, attempts to present the changing or unchanging perceptions and attitudes my participants held by exploring their evolving sense of identity through the three emerging themes and their sub-themes. It suggests that, at least at

the beginning of these teachers' careers, personal history and biographical accounts serve as a means of explanatory and justification mechanism that brings different aspects of teachers' lives together (Ball and Goodson, 1985; Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe, 1994). In this study, teachers' senses of professional identity support what is often implied in the research literature that professional identity is often less stable (McNally, 2006) and exhibits features of what Nias (1989) terms as 'the teaching self' which tends to be situated and contextualized. This sense of a teaching self assumed as my participants started working was interwoven with their pre-supposed identity which was made explicit in their autobiographical accounts. However, the notion of a core self, 'a well-defended, relatively inflexible substantial self into which we incorporate the most highly prized aspects of our self-concept and the attitudes and values which are most salient to it', remains to be explored further as it was developed based upon studies on teachers from different career stages or age groups (Nias, 1989: 26).

The findings also suggest that the sites in which early professional learning and development took place were important arenas for the construction of new teachers' professional identity. The initial motivation to enter teaching and initial sense of identity shaped by the 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975) and the unarticulated and unexamined beliefs about teaching and teachers (Bullough and Gitlin, 2001) were exposed to practical or theoretical challenges in the relational context of learning to teach (McNally, 2008) and the contrived supervisory context (Wong, 2004).

The analysis and discussion chapters first paid attention to beginning teachers' initial and later job-motivations in order to capture the change of perspectives taken place during the first year of teaching. Five common sub-themes, namely, working with children, working with colleagues, conflict with individual principles, responsibilities, workload, and recognition, and employment status and career directions, were identified from teachers' narratives as important source for satisfaction and dissatisfaction and as major factors in shaping or reinventing their perceptions.

The findings of this study found it difficult to align with Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of needs and Nias's (1989) categorization of satisfier or dissatisfiers in a sense that reasons for teachers to enter and stay in teaching are multifaceted and complex, and sometimes even contradictory, and therefore difficult to fit in the rigid categorizations as concluded by these authors. Therefore, the author seeks support from Fuller's (1970) stages of concerns for the reason that it allows more room for individual differences. What the participating teachers talked about seemed to focus on a self in relation to the significant others that had worked with them. And motivation and professional identity, from the angle of job-motivation, seem to arise out of the professional relationships and structural contexts. But the findings also point to teachers as self-directed autonomous individuals who were continuously reflecting on and revising their perceptions based on their experiences and situations in which they found themselves struggling.

The findings also attempted to show that making sense of the decision to teach and to stay in teaching in the context of the individual's biography and stories could be helpful in understanding beginning teachers' evolving professional identity. In this study the author found it difficult to articulate their motives in the same manner other researchers have done such as intrinsic and extrinsic categorisations. Whatever their motivations were, their sense of professional identity was deeply embedded and could only be better appreciated when located in personal experiences where their beliefs and values could be revealed.

The analysis and discussion chapters then point to self-images as reported by beginning teachers. Teachers' narratives revealed early learning experiences, qualifications, relationship with students, relationship with mentors and other colleagues, and school and academic subjects to be the common and main identity sources with which my participants talked about themselves. It was difficult for the author to reduce the complex classroom and school interactions beginning teachers encountered everyday to categories or dichotomous dimensions as the images of

teachers presented by individual teachers need to be better understood in the biographical and relational context in which the process of positioning took place.

The findings attempted to explore the ways in which my participants constructed or reconstructed their professional identities through the lens of self-image. The findings support the view that beginning teachers' sense of professional identity is largely characterized by personal histories and experiences and is constantly reshaped by the new relationships developed within the professional context where the initial conception and images of teachers and teaching confront meaningful changes. In this study the self-images of teachers also attempted to reveal the multiple influences, social, cultural, or even political, on professional identity which suggested that exploring self-images could function as a self-exploration tool to empower teachers to make choices that are more conscious and personally meaningful.

The narratives produced by my participants revealed preconceptions of teaching which were shaped or constructed by childhood experiences, early professional learning experiences and role model influences. All participating teachers exhibited tendency to incorporate professional identities or culturally-accepted role identities of teachers into their self-image or the image of the ideal teacher. These preconceptions, similar to the findings of Knowles' (1992) which were discussed in Chapter 6, can be strong and stable identity resources for some participants while being a place for constant debate and struggle for others as teaching experiences accumulated or significant events occurred.

Qualifications and employment status was considered to have significant impact on how my participants saw themselves in comparison to others, and on their sense of belongings and commitment to staying in teaching. Individual and collected values attached to qualifications, as shown in teachers' narratives, revealed different expectations as to matching employment status and employee treatment. The insecurities and unpleasantness generated by the unstable nature of the special teaching positions were shown to have negative impact on participating teachers.

Beginning teachers' self images also revealed deep influences of Confucius notion of learning and teaching, either as a point for agreement as to what a teacher should be or as a point for departure from the traditional conceptions of teaching and how teacher should behave. Teachers' narratives revealed interesting discussions concerning teachers' rights to expressing and holding different beliefs in terms of the purpose of education, teachers' roles and the degree of control in the classroom and in relation to students, parents, and other educators.

The findings suggest that, a comprehensive induction programme such as that of Yinchuan city's that was deeply rooted in daily teaching practice, could serve effectively for control-conscious administrations in a contrived curriculum and school context in China. The division of subject departments into core subjects and optional subjects based on the university entrance exams causing the 'balkanized' school culture, for instance, as Hargreaves (1994) suggests, might have problematic consequences as a result of the uneven distribution of resources and privileges. These went beyond the micro-politics of the dynamics of workplace relationships and office dramas and raised concerns for the impact of the deeply relational nature of the context of teaching on the private and personal values and agendas of individual teachers which might suppress the voices against dominant discourse and potential ethically bankrupt reforms. This discussion of conceptions and beliefs behind teachers' images led nicely to the next discussion chapter.

The last analysis and discussion chapter focused on the subjective educational theories beginning teachers held as organizing principles of their perceptions and choices (Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe, 1994). The findings suggest that teachers entered teaching with a set of beliefs and ideals that were deeply rooted in previous schooling and learning experiences. Some beliefs and perceptions in relation to the value or purpose of learning, although subjected to the reality shock of the first year of teaching, remained to be strong. My participants attached different meanings to learning and development which were reflected in their attitudes to learning activities and their learning styles. These beliefs also had impacted on their expectations for

their students and colleagues. The reality shock of the first year of teaching may have produced strategies for beginning teachers to adapt to the current culture of teaching but do not seem to change deep personal beliefs.

Of course, the first year of teaching should not be solely considered as a time for confronting pre-conceptualisation of teaching. The attention to the personal dimension of professional development in this study is not to privileging individual capacity to interpret, control and deliver educational activities over more collegial and systematic approaches (Hargreaves, 1992). Rather, it is to highlight the negotiated nature of beginning teacher perspectives within a context of multiple power relations. The findings of my study support Olson's (2008) suggestion that teachers' subjective educational theories not only assume the aspects traditionally circumscribed within traditional definitions of teacher knowledge such as subject knowledge and practical knowledge, but also incorporate teachers' personal values, expectations, beliefs construed by personal biographies, personal well-beings, emotions and dispositions.

The findings of this study supports the call for a critical stance to be taken in looking at both the explicit and implicit attempts by different groups to impose upon beginning teachers a prescribed definition or conception of teaching by recognising the complex nature of beginning teachers' perspectives and their relationships with personal/situational, social, cultural and structural constrains. My participants' stories to a certain extent revealed the instrumental value of learning embedded within the university exam systems and arguably the wider social and cultural context. Even though elements of personal autonomy were reflected in their narratives as to the purpose of learning and the teaching methods, beginning teachers in my study did show tendency to comply with the dominating practices, with a self-comforting understanding for some participants that the focus on grades and exams would give their students in the best advantage to compete in the existing social system in which instrumental values of learning was embraced.

Teachers' narratives also revealed conflicting pedagogical conceptions advocated by the new curriculum reform. Participants of my study all acknowledged the growing demands in student-teacher interaction and the important role of learners in the learning process based on the constructive conception of teaching and learning as socially situated activities. However, Teaching students to provide the right answer to exam questions suggested that the constructivist conception of knowledge as socially determined and constructed has yet to be fully appreciated which in turn has limited the extent to which teaching and learning methods could be evolved. There were even deeper moral debates and practical concerns revealed by my participants concerning equality and equity of schooling, especially for teachers who worked in schools with large population of students from economically-backward rural regions.

8.2.3. Summary

The methodological and analytical approach of this study gives access to an interpretive framework which made it possible to study the induction year of teachers as a constant process of negotiation and change for shared or conflict understandings between beginning teachers, mentors, colleagues, and school culture. The focus of this study has been on beginning teachers' perspectives which gave attention to both similar and different concerns and perceptions that form the core of the individual's perspectives. The narrative researcher sees the variations in teachers' perspectives deriving from personal experiences out of different opportunities and pressures as important resources for studying identity formation (Huberman and Miles, 2002). Such is the source for this study to look at beginning teachers' transitional status which produced dilemmas, conflicts, and change that were associated with social, cultural and structural factors.

This study attempted to address what Tickle (2000) has suggested that research about the process of becoming a teacher has focused more on the pursuit and adoption of identity and less on the process of development by locating learning into the 'motives of becoming' and personal changes. The findings would also like to raise questions about 'the aims and consequences of schooling' and 'the implications for the methods and organization of educational knowledge' so that the first year of teaching

means more than a time of ‘consolidating technical expertise’ or real-life problem-solving abilities but a time when the development of personal and professional qualities, personal and professional agency occur (Tickle, 2000: 100).

In rethinking the use of the theories and concepts of teacher induction and educational research in this thesis, the research process and the findings to a certain extent respond to, for example, Lu’s (2001) criticism that the Westernisation of the field of educational research leaves little space for an appreciation and understanding of China’s indigenous pedagogy. The examination of Western theories and concepts in this thesis may contribute to the rejection of a simplistic transplantation of Western pedagogical trends and theories into Chinese pedagogy by providing concerns and criticism of existing theories. The nature of narrative studies and acknowledgement subjective representation also allow the Chinese social and cultural influences to come through in teachers’ narratives.

The author also questions, for example, Chen’s (2010) proposal of ‘Asia as method’ as a way to ensure that Asian localities, rather than western theories or knowledge, become the reference point to each other. Firstly, even though ‘Asia as method’ serves as an interesting metaphor to critique the dominant use of western theories and concepts, the term ‘method’ itself raises concerns over the systematic conceptualisation of social research methodologies and methods in Asian academic communities. Unless a system of social research that is thoroughly different from the existing western conceptualisation, it would be impossible to ‘resist western domination and strive for academic independence’ (Yang, 2004: 4). Secondly, the assumed potential dominance of a Chinese indigenisation with its epistemological significance also faces the same danger of simplistic western importation. Therefore, this study suggests that it would be more productive to problematise the western theories and concepts and conceptualisation of social research by integrating them with local experiences, and at the same time, adopt a reflective attitudes in acknowledging the limitations and hidden premises of social research.

8.3. Limitations to This Research

In this study efforts have been made to make sure that the research was conducted appropriately in order to present results with validity and reliability. I have been tried to make explicit in my descriptions of how I understand the analytical approach and how each analytical method was employed and implemented. I have also incorporated notes of reflection in the methodology chapter in an attempt to increase the openness and transparency of data analysis procedures in terms of how the analysis was conducted, what findings were generated and interpreted. However, there are limitations to this study which need to be discussed.

This study was largely informed by theories and studies presented in western English language literature, partially due to the limited information on the topic from the literature in China. An attempt has been made to critically interrogate and reflect on the extent to which these theories and concepts can be used to interpret Chinese teachers' experiences. But future work on this is required.

The research design utilised the research tool of a narrative approach which, as Riessman (1993) points out, is not useful for studies of large numbers of nameless, faceless subjects. However, it should be acknowledged that narratives are, as Holstein and Gubrium (2000) comment, contingent to story-teller, audience, context, time and place and therefore no narration is ever neutral. Hence, the implication of this perspective is that the primary task for narrative researcher is not about making judgements as to whether narratives are accurate with regard to the pre-defined or objective reality in positivist terms. Nevertheless, I cannot be 'the judge of the accuracy' of the narratives or interpretation of these narratives (Soreide, 2007: 62). And if time permitted, more collaborative work between the researcher and the participants, between different researchers would enhance the trustworthiness and validity of the data collection and analysis process.

On the same note, Riessman (1993) suggests that narrative methods could be combined with other forms of qualitative analysis. For example, observation, as a powerful method in recording behaviour in natural settings, enables the researcher to

be in the real-settings and understand the situation and behaviour that is being described by the participants during the interview (Cohen et al, 2007; Patton, 2002). However, I decide not to use field observation for the following reasons. On one hand, observation can be problematic for this study due to the lack of control in natural settings which could render the data less useful. On the other, observation is suited for recording longitudinal data which requires access and adequate period of study. Due to the confined timeline of this study, it is more sensible to focus on other practical methods than collecting low quality observational data. The observation method also creates a problem of maintaining anonymity which is essential for this study (Bailey, 1994). However, the limitations of self-reported data of this study should be acknowledged. Moreover, Riessman (2008) also points out that, in order to combine narrative methods with other qualitative methods, some epistemological footwork needs to be done for the reason that the interpretive perspective that is embedded within narrative methods is different from the realist assumptions of many other forms of qualitative methods.

The voice-centred relational approach to data analysis paid attention to individual cases which in a sense delayed the process of data reduction to faceless and nameless themes (Mauthner and Doucet, 1998). However, the data analysis process was time consuming and I was frustrated not to be able to devote the same amount of time and space in this thesis to each one of my participants as I did for Teacher Fu as an example of data analysis in Chapter 3 due to limited time and resources as well as limited word count of PhD thesis. Therefore, a more creative data analysis and presentation method should be explored to keep my participants' voice alive. The interpretation process and presentation process was also limited by my English language skills as I should be more precise and efficient in my analysis and writings. And, the information-loss or –adding during the translation of transcripts should also be acknowledged.

Gubrium and Holstein (1997) point out that one of the greatest challenges for qualitative researchers is how to understand what others felt if those feelings cannot be adequately conveyed in words. One of the major limitations in my study is that I

should have done a better job in the research design stage and analysis stage to dig deeper to capture the emotional experience of my participants through well-designed interview questions, interview and interpersonal skills, and analytical methods that are attentive to emotional expressions.

Sample sizes in narrative studies are usually small as Elliott (2008) points out. The participants of this study were purposefully selected by the researcher from his hometown city with its own social and cultural characteristics. The findings may not apply to other cities in a country as massive as China. As with the limitation to Nias' (1989: 4) study, this study also admits to an 'apparent inconsistency' in a sense that findings were concluded in generalised terms while the research design and methods stresses individuality of beginning teachers. The small sample size also suggests that the cases in this study might be drawn from unrepresentative pools. Even though the goals of this study, in Riessman's (2008) words, is to learn more about the general from the particular, to inform overarching theory with contextualised cases, to make theoretical connections with existing theories and concepts through innovative research methods, it should be acknowledged that the findings of my study should not be generalised to Chinese teachers as a population and that only tentative conclusions and recommendations should be made.

8.4. Implications

The implications offered here reflect the concerns that have emerged from investigating the experiences of 23 beginning teachers in their first year of teaching. The findings raise several questions in relation to areas of teacher education and induction in the novice year of teaching which revolve around the personal and professional development of teachers. Although it is acknowledged as one of the limitations of this study that the findings of this study does not aim to be generalized to Chinese teachers as a population, it is still possible to discuss possible suggestions and questions with relevance to practice and future research on beginning teachers.

8.4.1. Implications for Teacher Education and Induction

The findings of this study highlight the impact of prior life experiences of beginning teachers on shaping their beliefs and perceptions. The personal dimension of beginning teachers' professional development (McNally, 2006) is also relevant here. This implies that the design and implementation of teacher education and induction programmes should take into consideration of these factors. It is also suggested that strong teacher education and induction programmes should engage beginning teachers in the planning, decision making and implementing of the induction activities as a way to give recognition to beginning teachers' contributions and to give proper attention to expressed needs of beginning teachers as a population as well as individual needs (Sachs, 2003).

The effect of pre-service teacher education programme, based on the findings of this study, was invisible or was 'washed out' by the first year of teaching. This may be due to the fact that pre-service teacher education programmes gave few opportunities to review teaching and learning strategies in classroom contexts and therefore did not adequately prepare my participants. Hence, productive teaching practice placement seems to be an important arrangement to prepare student teachers for the complexity of classroom teaching and clarify expectations and potential problems of micro-teaching with the supervision of experienced university tutors or teachers from the placement schools (Bullough and Gitlin, 2001).

The findings of this study suggest that some uncertainties in relation to teaching methodologies and teaching styles were derived from the prior beliefs or conceptions based on the principles they obtained from early learning experiences or teacher education programmes which were only partially understood. There should be a coherence agenda drawn up by the pre-service teacher education institutions and schools that receive beginning teachers to take into account of the various theoretical and practical needs of novice teachers (Lortie, 1975).

This leads to the comment that beginning teachers need a network of comprehensive support from the school, mentors, experienced colleagues and other potential support

providers which goes beyond mentoring. One important suggestion is for LEA, an important stakeholder, to produce transparent and specific policy regulations and guidelines to ensure collaborative efforts between partnership institutions and to ensure quality monitoring procedures to be implemented to minimise variances between schools. These monitoring measures should be attentive to critical issues such as teacher retention, classroom practice and student achievement as potential indicator for analyzing the effectiveness of its components and roles and responsibilities of its stakeholders (Paine, Fang, and Wilson, 2003).

Effective communication between LEA, schools and beginning teachers with regard to clarification of policy regulations should also be made. Induction programmes in Yinchuan already utilised many school-based activities. However, partnerships between different institutions offering other formats of induction activities can be crucial for beginning teachers teaching newly designed subjects or having no experienced mentors to support them in their own schools (O'Brien and Christie, 2008).

Both the curriculum reform and exam culture had shaped the teaching culture in a sense that both these initiatives put an emphasis on an external definition of teaching behaviours. For teacher educators in teacher education programmes and school induction programmes, it is important to be aware of and conscious about these identity resources so that it is possible for them, student teachers, and beginning teachers to be encouraged to question assumptions, both their own and external ones in a collaborative working environment. Giving voice to student and beginning teachers could also allow self-examination using their own words as to how they view certain metaphors or images of teaching and theories of teaching and learning and allow them to locate these meaningful discussions in an experiential and supportive context (Schempp, Sparkes and Templin, 1999).

Especially in the Chinese context, it seems to be difficult to foster teachers' appreciation of the social and political contexts in a reflective manner. However, only by doing so could student and beginning teachers start to critically reflect on the

moral and ethical issues of teaching practice and on their own beliefs about teaching. What also seems to be lacking in schools in Yinchuan was the encouragement for beginning teachers to take analytical approaches in reflecting on their teaching. Teachers were encouraged to be responsible for their own professional development but were not giving the degree of professional autonomy in terms of challenging assumptions and dominant practices (Calderhead and Gates, 1993). Such an agenda, however, does not imply that the kind of almost emancipator element should be privileged over the practical, technical or theoretical elements. Rather, it suggests that foundation knowledge of reflective and analytical practices should be embedded in teacher education and induction programmes.

8.4.2. Implications for Future Research on New Teacher Induction

This study mainly focused on listening to new teachers' voices in their first year of teaching. As Olson (2008) suggests, the implementation of effective induction programmes depends on local implementers such as teachers, mentors, principals, and students. And the effectiveness of induction policy and programmes should be determined by its impact on teacher retention, classroom instruction and practice, and student achievement (Strong, 2008). For future research, these areas of concerns suggest the need for a longitudinal study that could follow up on beginning teachers' lives beyond the first year of teaching. Measures of student achievement have always been subjected to debate. Nevertheless, it is important to consider students' perceptions. The attention should also be given to mentors as more research is needed to study the selection process of mentors, and the relationships between mentors and beginning teachers, especially from the lens of professional identity. The same suggestion applies to understanding the changing roles and responsibilities of teacher educators in pre-service teacher education programmes.

Research on beginning teacher induction could also benefit from studies that focus on identifying the challenges presented in the implementation process, especially those that could shed light on key factors contributing to the success or failure of individual schools. It will hopefully help explore the implementation gaps between schools and inform policy directives in the future. Although findings of this study

touched on some of the key elements of the implementation of induction programmes, more well-planned research is needed to identify the effective components of induction, key factors influencing implementation, and ultimately outcomes in terms of teacher performance and student achievement, with critical consideration to how each concepts should be conceptualised and measured.

It would also be important to explore the ethical, political and theoretical rationales for an effective partnership between schools and teacher education institutions. The problems encountered by student teachers and beginning teachers could be put into dialogue with both practitioners and academics which could address issues such as the problem of the ‘apprenticeships of observation’ (Lortie, 1975). Listening to voices of different stakeholders might paint images of what is possible and expected in collaborative endeavour.

The findings of this study support the view that teachers’ professional identity is multidimensional and temporary and there are multiple influences that continuously shape and reshape their sense of identity. For further research, it would be interesting to investigate historical, national, and public meta-narratives of the teaching profession as important resources for identity construction. It would also be important to ask how beginning teachers make sense of these external expectations. Well-designed research methodology and methods are also in need to shed light on the emotionality of the teaching profession in China such as emotional investment of teachers, vulnerability due to policy or structural changes, and imbalance between personal expectations and unrealistic expectations from parents or society.

Moreover, to echo Knowles, Cole and Preswood (1994) and Olson’s (2008) suggestions, a narrative approach could be useful when incorporated into student teacher or beginning teachers’ learning routines, an action research model or teacher research for professional renewal (Sachs, 2003) if appropriate. This study has suggested that narrative analysis could serve to challenge pre-judgment or pre-conceptions that are lacking explicit or experiential justification. However, teacher

educators should be given attention to the ethical concerns of using this method (Bullough and Gitlin, 2001).

One area in need for research is also reflected in my participants' narratives which is concerned with students from different backgrounds. Beginning teachers working in schools that accepted students from both rural and urban regions found it difficult to vary their teaching methods to accommodate different needs of these students. Again, it would also be essential to engage pupils in the process of research.

Finally, early professional learning and development of beginning teachers take place in a relational context in which complex and multi-dimensional identity construction takes place. Innovative research design and methods are needed to better explore beginning teacher induction through the lens of professional identity. As Riessman (1993) points out, combining other forms of qualitative methods could enrich the research process with proper consideration to the epistemological compatibility of these different methods. Nevertheless, as Riessman (1993) argues, the philosophical and theoretical negotiation of combining different qualitative methods could encourage researchers to confront the partial, fallible, contingent nature of any methodologies and methods and therefore allow diversity of representations.

8.5. A Final Word

This thesis reports on the findings of a PhD project exploring induction of newly qualified teachers using a narrative approach. At the initial stage of research design, I was warned over the complexities of the tasks of qualitative and narrative analysis. I have agonized over both the possibilities and the restraints offered by narrative methods and now I feel I am better oriented into the field of narrative studies.

With regard to the explorative nature of this research, this study aims to add to the existing studies on teacher induction from a Chinese perspective by locating the study in the unique context of Yinchuan, a medium-size city in China. It attempts to critically engage relevant theories and concepts in Western English language literature in a hope to contribute to the development of theoretical knowledge in relation to teacher identity formation and teacher development. It also attempts to

benefit from creative narrative analysis methods to give voice to the participants which hopefully would contribute to a more humanistic approach in looking at new teacher induction in China in terms of both research and practice.

Although I think that my study does contribute to understanding of beginning teacher induction in Yinchuan and to understanding of the nature of teacher change in the first year of teaching, I feel like going right back to the beginning and there leaves so much to be learnt.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Short Explanations for Terms in Chinese

1. Basic Education in China includes three stages of education: firstly, kindergarten and pre-school class as the pre-school education; secondly, primary school as the elementary education; and lastly the secondary education which consists of two parts: the regular and vocational junior high school and, the regular and vocational senior high school. The elementary school and the regular and vocational junior high school education constitute the nine-year compulsory education (Sun, 2003).

2. Quality Education in China is adopted as the antithesis of ‘Examination-Oriented’ education to emphasize the all-round development of students as whole persons (Lo, 2000). Quality education, according to The Action Plan to Revitalize Education in the Twenty-First Century (1999), has become a must given the current school practice of prioritizing knowledge-based learning and academic performance and neglecting cognitive development, innovative and critical thinking, moral and political education, as well as aesthetic and physical education.

3. Special Teaching Post is a strategy designed to address the shortage of teachers in rural and underdeveloped areas in China. It aims to improve the overall quality of rural teachers by recruiting new university/college graduates who have obtained teaching qualification and who are under thirty years old. Teachers’ salaries are borne by special central government for a period of three years with an average income of 15,000 RMB. After holding the post for three years, the teachers can continue their job upon further tests and the responsibility for funding the special post will be delegated to local financial department.

Appendix 2

Models of pre-service teacher preparation

1. Model of 'Three plus One' or 'Two plus One plus One, which consists of the first stage of three-year study in choosing discipline and the second stage of one-year study in pedagogical content and replacement opportunities to teach in real school settings for those who wish to become teachers at primary and secondary schools, with a reward of a bachelor's degree and teacher qualification certificate;
2. Model of 'Two plus Two' provides the students with two-year of general education in their choosing subjects. At the end of their second-year study, the students can choose to continue with teaching-oriented route or subject-oriented route;
3. Model of 'Four plus X' with four-year study for completing a bachelor's degree in specific disciplines. The X refers to a one- or two-year programme of educational studies in specific disciplines. Upon completion, a double-bachelor's degree or a Master of Education programme (MEd) will be awarded. This model has become very popular in some prestigious normal institutions such as Beijing Normal University and East China Normal University (Shi and Englert, 2008: 356; Li, 1999; Research Group of Educational Achievement and Experience - Post-Reform and Opening up Period, 2008).

Appendix 3

Six goals of the new curriculum reform

Six goals of the new curriculum reform are outlined and stressed in the Guidelines on Curriculum Reform of Basic Education promulgated by Ministry of Education:

1. Changing Course Functions towards Quality-oriented education.
2. Restructuring courses based on the principle of equilibrium, integration and selectivity.
3. Changing curricula contents to strengthen the connection between curriculum and social progress, technological development and students' experience.
4. Changing teaching and learning methods that can help students to collect and process information, obtain new knowledge, discover and solve problems, and learn to communicate and cooperate with others.
5. Changing the function of teacher and student evaluation.
6. Changing curriculum administration from centralized to three levels of curriculum administration. (Cited in Huang, 2004: 102).

Appendix 4

Induction Support for new teachers in Shanghai

School-based:

- School-based mentoring in subject-area teaching;
- School-based mentoring in working with pupils
- School orientations in the summer for teachers from a single or many nearby schools – with administrators, experienced teachers and second-year teachers talking about very specific issues related to teaching, working with pupils and families, school goals, etc.;
- Pairing up new and older teachers to make visits to pupils' homes before the school year starts;
- Contract or formal agreements related to the goals and work of novices and mentors;
- Ceremonies welcoming new teachers, assigning mentors or celebrating the end of a year's work and collaboration, with participants reflecting on a year's learning and/or collaboration.

District-based:

- District-based workshops and courses aimed at new teachers;
- District-organized teaching competitions for new teachers;
- District-provided mentoring;
- District hot-line for new teachers (with subject specialists on hand at assigned times to answer phoned-in questions);
- District award for outstanding novice/mentor work.

Occurring at both school and district, often in coordinated sequence:

- Peer observation – of mentor/novice, of other teachers in the school and other schools;
- 'public' or 'open' lessons – observed by the novice or with a group of novices (and others), typically with a public debriefing and discussion of the lesson afterwards;
- 'report' lessons – in which a new teacher is observed, subsequently comments on the lesson and then receives criticism and suggestions from others;
- 'talk' lessons – presentations, in which a teacher (new or experienced) talks through a lesson and provides justification for its design;
- Inquiry projects/action research studies done by new teachers with support from others in the school or district teaching research section or induction staff;
- A district- or school-developed handbook for new teachers and mentors.

(Adopted from Britton, et al., 2003: 39)

Appendix 5

Key Features of Limited versus Comprehensive Induction Programmes

Programme Feature	Limited Induction	Comprehensive Induction
Goals	Focused on teacher orientation, support, enculturation, retention	Also promotes career learning, enhances teaching quality
Policies	Provides optional participation and modest time, usually unpaid	Requires participation and provides substantial, paid time
Overall Programme Design	Employs a limited number of ad hoc induction providers and activities	Plans an induction system involving a complementary set of providers and activities
Induction as a Transitional Phase	Treats induction as an isolated phase, without explicit attention to teachers' prior knowledge or future development	Considers the influence of teacher preparation and professional development on induction programme design
Initial Teaching Conditions	Limited attention to initial teaching conditions	Attention to assigned courses, pupils, non-teaching duties
Level of Effort	Invests limited total effort, or all effort in few providers, activities	Requires substantial overall effort
Resources	Does not provide resources sufficient to meet programme goals	Provides adequate resources to meet programme goals
Levels of the Education System Involved	Involves some levels of the system, perhaps in isolation	Involves all relevant levels of system in articulated roles
Length of Programme	One year or less	More than one year
Sources of Support	Primarily or solely uses on mentor	Uses multiple, complementary induction providers
Conditions for Novices and Providers	Usually attends to learning conditions for novices	Also provides good conditions and training for providers
Activities	Uses a few types of induction activities	Uses a set of articulated, varied activities

Table 2.1: Key Features of Limited versus Comprehensive Induction Programmes
(Adopted from Britton et al., 2003: 2)

Appendix 6

Interview Schedule

Phase One

This interview protocol is for the Phase 1 of data collection. The questions are to stimulate and organize the interview. But the participants' answers will also be directing the interview.

A. Interview Schedule – Beginning Teachers

Name:

Preferred name to be used in the thesis:

Age: Female Male

Interview I: Reflecting on Previous Experiences (Biography) and Career Experiences

1. Looking back over your previous experiences, can you tell me something about yourself, especially as a learner?

Can you tell me something about your experience of growing up, for example, your schooling experiences as far back as kindergarten?

Did you enjoy your learning experiences? Did you consider yourself to be a good learner?

Can you tell me something about your decision to become a teacher?

What kind of teacher do you want to become?

Was the decision to become a teacher related to your own experiences growing up?

2. What are your impressions and feelings when you go to your school and class for the first time? in the first week? in the first month?

Could you please describe a normal school day and a normal class to me?

What do you enjoy about your job?

What do you enjoy about your class/school?

What challenges and difficulties do you meet?

Where do you find support?

What kind of support do you want?

3. How do you perceive yourself as teachers?

What roles and responsibilities do you have as a first year teacher?

What must a teacher know and do to be a good teacher?

What kind of relationships do you expect to establish with your students, colleagues, and principal?

How do you see yourself as a teacher?

How do you see yourself as a teacher in your subject area?

How confident are you as a teacher now?

What expectations do you have for yourself in the first year?

What factors do you think influenced how you perceive teachers and yourself as a teacher?

What's your plan for your future professional development in 5/10 years?

Interview II: Reflecting on Early Professional Learning and Development and Induction

1. Thinking of yourself as teacher, what does professional learning and development mean to you?

What do you think are the purposes of professional learning and development?

Why do you engage in the professional learning activities and what motivates you?

2. Can you tell me about your own professional learning experiences?

How do you plan your own professional learning?

What are the purposes and outcomes of the learning?

What do you do after you engaged in professional learning?

Can you tell me about the successful professional learning and development experiences?

(when, where, who, form, purpose)

What do you think is the impact of your professional learning experience on your perception about being a teacher?

3. Can you tell me about your induction experiences?

How accessible was information about induction policy and programmes?

What is your impression of the induction policy and the induction programme? Does it match the policy directives?

What kind of support do you expect to get from your department/school/local education authorities?

How do you think of the induction programme provided to you in your school?

What changes would you like to make?

How will your progress and performance be assessed?

What do you consider to be the best way to assess new teachers?

What impacts do you think your induction experience have on your perceptions of the teaching profession and on your future career plans?

How do you think the induction programme relate to your pre-service programme?

B. Interview Schedule – Local Education Authorities (Director of Teacher's Office, Provincial/District Education Bureau)

1. How long have you been in your current position? How do you define your role?
2. What did you do before you took on your present role?
3. Could you please describe your experience with any beginning teacher induction programmes?
4. Could you please define induction?
5. How do you perceive Ningxia/District's induction policy (assumptions and goals)?
6. In what ways does it support new teachers?
7. What are the advantages and disadvantages? What changes would you make?
8. Do any of your staff members work directly with new teachers? Could you please describe their roles? What are your expectations of their work with the new teachers?
9. Could you please describe the district's induction programme? (content, purposes)
10. Do you think the programme design meets the goals of the policy?
11. How effectively is it aligned with provincial/district/school site goals?
12. What is the new teachers' role in the designing of the induction programme?
13. How much information about the new teachers do you have when they came?
14. What are the relationships between the induction programme and the preservice education programme?

15. What is the most critical issue for novice teachers that must be addressed by the induction programme? Have you noticed any changes in the performance or attitudes of your new teachers who participate in the induction programme?
16. How would you characterise the support you are offering for probationers?
17. How are new teachers assessed? What are your impressions on the assessment system? What changes would you make?
18. What are you finding to be the concerns of the new teachers?
19. How is the induction programme evaluated?
20. Are there any additional CPD at provincial and national level which new teachers may opt in to?
21. In your opinion, what are the challenges in designing and implementing a high quality induction programme that meets new teachers' needs? In what ways can the current programme be improved?
22. Please provide details of any changes you plan to make in the CPD for new teachers and supporters in the future?
23. Please describe any plans the schools and LEA has specifically for teachers in their second and third year of teaching.
24. Any further comments?

C. Interview Schedule – Principals

1. How long have you been in your current position? How do you define your role?
2. What did you do before you took on your present role?
3. Could you please describe your experience with any beginning teacher induction programmes? What is your role in relation to induction?
4. Could you please define induction?
5. How do you perceive Ningxia/District's induction policy (assumptions and goals)? What is your understanding of your school's induction policy?
6. What are your impressions of the induction policy? In what ways does it supports new teachers? What are the impacts of induction on new teachers/schools? Do you have any input on this?
7. What are the advantages and disadvantages? What changes would you make?
8. How has the current induction policy change you and new teachers' work?
9. Do any of your staff members work directly with new teachers? Could you please describe their roles? What are your expectations of their work with the new teachers?
10. Could you please describe your district/school's induction programme? What are the purpose and key components of the programme? What are the requirements for participation in the programme? Do you think the programme design meet the goals of the policy?
11. What are your impressions of the programme design? How effectively is it aligned with provincial/district/school site goals? Do you have any input on this?
12. What is the new teachers' role in the designing of the induction programme?
13. How much information about the new teachers do you have when they came?
14. What are the relationships between the induction programme and the preservice education programme?

15. What is the most critical issue for novice teachers that must be addressed by the induction programme? Have you noticed any changes in the performance or attitudes of your new teachers who participate in the induction programme?
16. How would you characterise the support you are offering for probationers?
17. How are new teachers assessed? What are your impressions on the assessment system? What changes would you make?
18. What are you finding to be the concerns of the teachers?
19. How is the induction programme evaluated? What are our impressions on the evaluation system? What changes would you make?
20. In your opinion, what are the challenges in designing and implementing a high quality induction programme that meets new teachers' needs? In what ways can the current programme be improved?
21. Please provide details of any changes you plan to make in the CPD for new teachers and supporters in the future?
22. Please describe any plans the schools and LEA has specifically for teachers in their second and third year of teaching.
23. How would you rate the induction scheme's effectiveness in improving the quality of the teaching workforce?
24. Any further comments?

Phase Two

The following interview protocol is for the **Phase Two** of data collection. The questions are to stimulate and organize the interview. But the participants' answers will also be directing the interview.

A. Interview Schedule – Beginning Teachers

Name:

Preferred name to be used in the thesis:

Age: Female Male

I. Reflecting on the First Year of Teaching

1. Could you talk me through your first year of teaching from the first day till today please?

What is new with you?

What happened yesterday? Was it a typical day?

Could you please describe a school day that you felt especially happy and meaningful and a school day that you felt stressful and unhappy?

When did you feel you have a major breakthrough in teaching? How did it happen?
How did it feel?

2. What are your impressions and feelings of the school and your class?

Now, what do you enjoy about your job?

What do you enjoy about your class/school?

Could you please describe a normal school day and a normal class to me?

What are the children like in your class? Any students stand out?

What is your relationship like with your
students/parents/mentor/colleagues/principal?

What challenges and difficulties do you meet with building relationships with them?

Where do you find support? What do you think of the support you get? What kind of
support do you want?

3. How do you perceive yourself as teachers?

What roles and responsibilities do you have as a first year teacher? Your workload?

Could you please describe what expectations do your students, principals and your
mentors have for you?

How do you see yourself as a teacher?

How do you see yourself as a teacher in your subject area? (Lesson plan and
instruction)

Can you describe one of your best lessons?

How confident are you as a teacher now?

What must a teacher know and do to be a good teacher?

(With reference to the previous interview transcript) If any change of perceptions has
take place, how did it happen and why?

What do you think you will do differently next year?

In what ways do you feel that you have achieved your expectations for the first year
of teaching?

So what motivates you to be a teacher now?

What factors do you think influenced how you perceive teachers and yourself as a teacher?

What are your expectations for yourself in the second year of teaching? What's your plan for your future professional development in 5/10 years? (Special teaching post)

II: Reflecting on Early Professional Learning and Development and Induction

1. Thinking of yourself as teacher, what does professional learning and development mean to you?

What do you think are the purposes of professional learning and development?

Why do you engage in the professional learning activities and what motivates you?

How did your perceptions change?

2. Can you tell me about your own professional learning experiences?

How do you plan your own professional learning?

What are the purposes and outcomes of the learning?

What do you do after you engaged in professional learning?

Can you tell me about the successful professional learning and development experiences? (when, where, who, form, purpose)

What do you think is the impact of your professional learning experience on your perception about being a teacher?

3. Can you tell me about your induction experiences?

How accessible was information about induction policy and programmes?

What is your impression of the induction policy and the induction programme? Does it match the policy directives?

What kind of support/resources did you get from your department/school/local education authorities? How would you characterize the support you get?

How do you think of the induction programme provided to you in your school? How would you characterize the support you get?

How was the communication between you and your mentor/colleagues/principal/LEA?

What changes would you like to make?

How was your progress and performance be assessed?

What do you consider to be the best way to assess new teachers?

What impacts do you think your induction experience have on your perceptions of the teaching profession and on your future career plans?

How do you think the induction programme relate to your pre-service programme?

Do you have any anxieties for the next year?

What expectations do you have for the second year induction programme?

B. Interview Schedule – Support Providers (Department Support Providers/Mentors/Teacher Training Centre)

1. How long have you been in your current position? How do you define your role? How have you reached the definition of the role?
2. What did you do before you took on your present role? What training have you received for the current role?
3. Could you please describe your experience with any beginning teacher induction programmes? What is your role in relation to induction?
4. Could you please define induction?
5. What is your understanding of Ningxia/District's induction policy (assumptions and goals)? What is your understanding of your school's induction policy?
6. What are your impressions of the induction policy? In what ways does it supports new teachers? What are the impacts of induction on new teachers/schools? Do you have any input on this?
7. What are the advantages and disadvantages? What changes would you make?
8. How has the current induction policy change you and new teachers' work?
9. Do any of your staff members work directly with new teachers? Could you please describe their roles? What are your expectations of their work with the new teachers?
10. Could you please describe your district/school's induction programme? What are the purpose and key components of the programme? What are the requirements for participation in the programme? Do you think the programme design meet the goals of the policy?
11. What are you impressions of the programme design? How effectively is it aligned with provincial/district/school site goals? Do you have any input on this?
12. What is the new teachers' role in the designing of the induction programme?
13. How much information about the new teachers do you have when they came?
14. What are the relationships between the induction programme and the preservice education programme?
15. What is the most critical issue for novice teachers that must be addressed by the induction programme? Have you noticed any changes in the performance or attitudes of your new teachers who participate in the induction programme?

16. How would you characterise the support you are offering for probationers? What do you think are the traits and skills of a good support?
17. How are new teachers assessed? What are your impressions on the assessment system? What changes would you make?
18. What are you finding to be the concerns of the teachers?
19. How is the induction programme evaluated? What are our impressions on the evaluation system? What changes would you make?
20. In your opinion, what are the challenges in designing and implementing a high quality induction programme that meets new teachers' needs? In what ways can the current programme be improved?
21. Please provide details of any changes you plan to make in the CPD for new teachers and supporters in the future?
22. Please describe any plans the schools and LEA has specifically for teachers in their second and third year of teaching.
23. How would you rate the induction scheme's effectiveness in improving the quality of the teaching workforce?
24. Any further comments?

Appendix 7

Participants

1. Participant Details (Pilot Study)

Name	Gender	Age	School Description	School	Subject	Qualification	Birth Place	University Name and Place	Interview Session
1.Ma Chunchun	Male	24	Urban Senior High School; Provincial Demonstration School	Wuzhong Secondary School A	Music	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2.May 2010
2. Shan	Female	22	Urban Senior High School; Provincial Demonstration School	Wuzhong Secondary School A	English	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2.May 2010
3.Chang Liang	Male	24	Urban Senior High School; Provincial Demonstration School	Wuzhong Secondary School A	Information Technology	B.Sc.	Shanxi	Shanxi Normal University (Shanxi)	1. Nov 2009 2.May 2010
4. Xie	Female	24	Suburban Senior High School; boarding school	Tianjiabing Secondary School B	Psychology/student counsellor	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Shanxi Normal University (Shanxi)	1. Nov 2009 2.May 2010
5. Luo	Female	25	Suburban Senior High School; boarding school	Tianjiabing Secondary School B	Physics/Assistant class director	B.Sc. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2.May 2010
6. Sun	Female	25	Suburban Senior High School; boarding school	Tianjiabing Secondary School B	Chinese/Assistant class director	B.A.	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2.May 2010

2. Participant Details (Main Study)

Name	Gender	Age	School Description	School	Subject	Qualification	Birth Place	University Name and Place	Interview Session
1.Meng	Male	23	Urban; Junior High	No.3 Secondary School	Geology	B.A. (TE)	Shanxi	Shanxi Normal	1. Nov 2009

Qingguo			School	D				University (Shanxi)	2. May 2010
2. He Rong	Female	23	Urban; Junior High School	No.3 Secondary School D	English	B.A. (TE)	Shandong	Shanxi Normal University (Shanxi)	1. Nov 2009 2. July 2010
3.Fu	Male	24	Urban; Junior High School	No.3 Secondary School D	History	B.A. (TE)	Henan	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. May 2010
4. Li Jing	Female	22	Urban; Junior High School	No.3 Secondary School D	Psychology	B.A.	Shanxi	Shanxi Normal University (Shanxi)	1. Nov 2009 2. May 2010
5. Jia Yan	Female	23	Urban; Junior High school	No.3 Secondary School D	Moral Education	B.A.	Shanxi	Shanxi Normal University (Shanxi)	1. Nov 2009 2. May 2010
6. Liu	Male	25	City Suburban; Junior High School	No.20 Secondary School G	P.E.	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. July 2010
7.Ma Liyuan	Female	23	City Suburban; Junior High School	No.20 Secondary School G	Music	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
8.Zhang Rong	Female	25	City Suburban; Junior High School	No.20 Secondary School G	Chinese	M.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Shanxi Normal University (Shanxi)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
9. Kang	Female	24	Urban; Senior High School	Yinchuan Experimental Secondary School C	Chinese	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
10. Feng Rui	Female	23	Urban; Senior High School	Yinchuan Experimental Secondary School C	Art	B.A. (T E)	Ningxia	Art College of China (Zhejiang)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
11. Ma	Male	26	Urban; Senior High School	Yinchuan Experimental Secondary School C	Maths	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
12. Liu	Female	24	Rural; Junior High School	Manchun Secondary School F	Information Technology	B.A.	Ningxia	Shānxī Normal University (Shānxī)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
13.Yang Limei	Female	25	Rural; Junior High School	Manchun Secondary School F	English	B.A.	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
14.He Wangying	Female	25	Rural; Junior High School	Manchun Secondary School F	English	B.A.	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010

15. Zhou Liyuan	Female	23	Urban; Senior High School; Boarding	Yucai Secondary School E	History	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
16. Liu Bo	Male	23	Urban; Senior High School; Boarding	Yucai Secondary School E	Geology	B.A. (TE)	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010
17. Wang Chunxia	Female	23	Urban; Senior High School; Boarding	Yucai Secondary School E	English	B.A.	Ningxia	Ningxia University (Ningxia)	1. Nov 2009 2. June 2010

3. Participant Details (Principals, Mentoring Teachers and LEA Officials)

Participant	School	School Type	Title
1. Mr. Ding	Wuzhong	Urban	Principal
2. Mr. Wang	Wuzhong	Urban	Vice-Principal/Physics Teacher/Mentoring Teacher
3. Mr. Qi	Wuzhong	Urban	Leader of Political Science Teaching and Research Group/ Mentoring Teacher
4. Mr. Wu	Tianjiabing	City Suburban	Principal/Chinese Teacher/Mentoring Teacher
5. Mr. Tian	Tianjiabing	City Suburban	Vice-Principal/English Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
6. Mr. Fang	Tianjiabing	City Suburban	Chinese Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
7. Mrs. Wang	Experimental	Urban	Vice Principal/ Principal (Promoted in Jan 2010)/Maths Teacher/Mentoring Teacher
8. Mr. Liu	Experimental	Urban	Principal (Reassigned to another school in Jan 2010)
9. Mrs. Wang	Experimental	Urban	Maths Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
10. Mr. Ma	No. 3	Urban	Vice-Principal/Physics Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
11. Mrs. Zheng	No. 3	Urban	English Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
12. Mrs. Yang	Yucai	Urban/Boarding	Principal/Physics Teacher
13. Mr. Huang	Yucai	Urban/Boarding	Physics Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
14. Mr. Wang	Manchun	Rural	Principal/Chinese Teacher/Mentoring Teacher
15. Mr. Li	Manchun	Rural	Director of Teaching Affairs Office/ English Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
16. Mr. Qi	No. 20	City Suburban	Principal
17. Mrs. Ma	No. 20	City Suburban	Chinese Teacher/ Mentoring Teacher
Participant (Officials)	Title	Department	

Mr. Zhu	Director	Provincial Teaching and Research Section
Mr. Jing	Member	National Education Inspection Expert Group/National Education Inspector
Mr. Tian	Director	Provincial Institute for Scientific Research in Education
Mrs. Wu	Director	Provincial Teachers' Office, Ningxia Education Department
Mrs. Heng	Deputy Director	Provincial Educational Inspection Office, Ningxia People's Government
Mr. Wu	Director	Teacher Training Centre, Ningxia University (reassigned as Head of School, School of International Education, Ningxia University in 2010)

Appendix 8

Consent Form

Teacher Induction: A Qualitative Case Study of Secondary School Teachers in China

新教师培训：中国中学新教师案例研究

Information Sheet for Participants 参与研究人员信息手册



Dear Participants, 尊敬的校长、老师，

您好！

Introduction 简介

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Han Xu, a doctoral student from the Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh. You are selected as a potential participant in this study for the reason that you are a beginning teacher in your first year of teaching with no previous full-time teaching experiences/for the reason that you are an important stakeholder in designing and implementing induction policy and programme. Your participation in this study is voluntary. The findings of this study will contribute to Han Xu's doctoral dissertation in partial fulfillment of a Doctorate in Education. Please take as much time as you need to read this information sheet.

You are invited to take part in this study because I am trying to understand more about how beginning teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards teaching as a career and themselves as teachers change during the first year of teaching. I am also hoping to learn more about your perceptions about the induction policy and programmes to understand how well new teachers are supported and how the support can be improved.

我是英国爱丁堡大学教育学院教育管理与学校发展研究中心的一名博士在读生。很荣幸能邀请您参与我的博士课题研究。该研究试图通过纪录新教师在工作初期的社会交际与心路历程，为新教师的职业发展与培训提供有力的实际依据。因此，您的参与将是该研究能够成功的关键。在此感谢您从百忙之中抽出时间参与访谈，请您仔细阅读本信息手册，并将您的疑问告诉我，我将尽力解答。

Procedures 研究设计

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be interviewed two times by Han Xu during the autumn of 2009 and the summer of 2010. You will also be invited to

review interview transcripts in order to verify our communication. Each interview will last for one hour for each interview. Your revision comments will be greatly valued and you will have access to the research findings which include your narrative comments.

如果您愿意参与该研究，您将在2009-2010学年参与1-2次每次约1小时左右的访谈。如果条件容许，我将提供访谈纪录来确保我们的之间的交流准确无误。同时，非常欢迎您对我的访谈问题、研究设计提出宝贵的建议。

Voluntary participation and Confidentiality 保密与自愿参与原则

Participation in this case study is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time. Interview audio recordings/notes will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the raw data. The information collected about you will be coded using a fake name.

首先，该研究将严格遵守英国教育研究协会道德规范。访谈将在您容许的前提下被录音，该访谈录音将完全保密，只有我可以使用的原始数据。如果您不希望使用真实信息，在论文中将全部使用假名。同时，您可以随时选择停止或者退出该研究。如果在访谈中，有个别问题让您感觉为难或者不方便回答，您可以随时选择跳过问题。

Contact Information 研究者联系信息

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Han Xu by E-mail at edwardnx@googlemail.com.

如果你有任何疑问或者意见与建议，请随时联系：

英国爱丁堡大学教育学院

韩 煦

邮箱： edwardnx@googlemail.com

Appendix 9

The Life Story Method

Participant: Fu

Fu was one of seven novice teachers in school A. School A is a comprehensive junior secondary school, located in the heart of the city of Yinchuan. The faculty of 144 members is made up of experienced and senior as well as young teachers. The age structure of faculty is relatively stable with the merger with another school in 2009 and with senior teachers' retirement. To compete for a position in this urban school as a beginning teacher, newly graduates need to take part in two rounds of examinations hosted by the local education bureau with a panel of judges from the school and the bureau. As a public school, it receives direct funding from Ningxia Education Department. One of the features of this school is the well organized and supervised science learning activities. The school motto says *Qinmian boxue, Zhixing heyi* (Syncretism of diligent and scholarship, knowledge and practice). The two key themes of school culture emphasized by school principal was professional ethics of teachers and active learning of students.

Reading one: Storyline

a) Personal background and learning experience

Fu was born and raised in a city in Shandong province, a developed costal region comparing to Ningxia. He grew up in a traditional nuclear family and he was the only the child. When Fu was growing up, he admired his parents and considered them to be the most important teachers in his life who taught him the basic qualities of being a man. Both of his parents were high school teachers and they both taught Chinese. Fu was also very interested in Chinese traditional literature and history.

Fu went to schools in the city which were considered good schools. He was also proud of the overall high quality education Shandong province had provided for him. He had this own way of understanding what 'good education quality' meant to him and he mentioned that the city schools had better facilities and learning conditions.

It (Good schools) means schools with good education quality and high promotion rate. Like my senior secondary school was one of the key schools. The entrance standard was very high.

Basically It (high education quality) means high standard and good over-all learning conditions. We have very high standard for university-entrance examination grades. The grades to get into second or third rank universities in our province are even higher than the grades to get into top rank universities in some other provinces. Plus there are a lot of students, so there is fierce competition.

The city has even better learning conditions, especially teachers. The teachers are all university graduates or postgraduates.

He missed his life in senior secondary school during which time he experienced change and growth. He enjoyed the positive competition between his classmates which created great learning environment. Not only did he work very hard to win the first place in the exams, he was also greatly motivated by the university-entrance examination.

Fu was very impressed by his class director's liberal management style in senior secondary school. Unlike other teachers who adopt oppressive management style, this particular teacher trusted his students which encouraged his students to be more self-regulated. Fu was also grateful for how this teacher 'rescued' him:

He changed me from a child who was naughty, trouble-making, overactive child to a child who wanted to study, (and) to make progress. He encouraged me, (and) he recognized all my achievements.

On the contrary, Fu remembered another teacher from his junior secondary school who he and his classmates 'despised'. At that age he was aware that what this teacher did was not a good example for him.

When I was in junior secondary school, there was this teacher, (who) led questionable life style. He smoked, drank and gambled. He also had family problem, and he used dirty words a lot. At that time we despised that teacher. But no big negative influence on us. Because we knew it was bad, so we would go that way.

b) Teacher education

After the university-entrance exam, Fu chose to leave his hometown and study history in a university in Ningxia. He made this decision based on two reasons. First of all, his exam score was not high enough for him to go to top-rated university in coastal cities. Secondly, when he was reading the prospectus of Ningxia University, he found that the history programme there was not a teacher education programme which was rare.

He did not want to be a student teacher and his parents supported his decisions that becoming a teacher was just a backup option. The teaching profession did not seem to be an attractive one in terms of salary and treatment. Moreover, he felt he was more interested in doing research in history.

I applied for history major in Ningxia University. At that time on the prospectus of Ningxia University we received in Shandong province, there was no 'teacher education'; no these two words to describe the history major. That was actually the reason why I chose Ningxia University. In the end, after I arrived in Ningxia University and I took a look at the programme, it turned out to be a teacher education programme. I was pretty disappointed at the

time. It was impossible to change majors or universities, and it would cost a lot of money.

Fu started his university life in disappointment. He also felt the disparity between education in Shandong and Ningxia:

Ningxia University is not top-ranked; there are huge differences between students' academic abilities. Some of the local students from minority groups have bonus points when they take university-entrance exams. University also lowers the standard for local students. The students can get into university with around 400 points for the university-entrance exams. In Shandong province, it is even difficult to get into the lowest rank universities with 500 points.

De-motivated was how he felt. Although it was very difficult to get in a university, but it was easy to graduate, therefore, he felt that students didn't work hard enough like they used to be in secondary school. Fu was relatively self-controlled as he rarely skipped classes or stayed up late to play computer games like many other students did. Even though he was less motivated, he still managed to work hard on things that he was interested in. He was also very diligent in preparing for the graduate school entrance examination.

Apart from subject learning, Fu also learnt about teaching methodologies in the university. However, he felt what he had learnt was irrelevant when he started teaching. At the end of the four-year teacher education programme, Fu did his placement as a student history teacher at No. 2 Middle School for three months. Through his study and placement experience, Fu discovered that he wanted to teach because he wanted to share with others his passion for ancient Chinese literature and texts. Partially Influenced by Confucius, Fu felt that he was the kind of person who would want to 'propagate doctrines, impart knowledge and dispel doubts'.

After graduation from the teacher education programme and being award the qualification for teaching as primary and secondary school teachers, Fu was accepted as a postgraduate student to pursue a Master's Degree in History at the Department of History in the same university. This master's programme was completely subject-based and there were no teaching component or placement opportunities.

c) First year of teaching

After Fu was awarded a MA in History, He decided to become a teacher. It was difficult for a history major to pursue a career other than teaching. Even becoming a teacher was competitive because of the increasing number of university graduates. The Ministry of Education issued the policy of establishing special teaching posts which were funded by the central government as a way dealing with employment issues as well as hiring qualified teachers for schools in rural and underdeveloped regions. Fu took part in the special teaching post selection procedure and was appointed as a special teaching post holder at No.3 middle school.

Two Months

He officially became a full-time history teacher in September 2010. He had spent six years in Yinchuan city so he was familiar with the environment. The school Fu worked for, in his opinion, was a second-rated urban school. Compared with top-rated schools in the city and schools in his hometown Shandong, this school was in relatively worse physical condition. However, he considered the quality of teaching to be fine because the progression rate of school was very high:

This is an urban school, maybe a second-rate school. The hardware/software of the school is not as good as No.1 and No.2 secondary school. But the quality of teaching is fine. The progression rate of the students moving from junior secondary to senior secondary school is very high. The students generally come from the city, they come from rich families. The campus is a bit small, and the buildings are old. In my Shandong this school is in relatively bad condition.

The first several weeks as a new teacher had went good for Fu. He had built very good relationship with his colleagues. Senior teachers had been friendly to him. As one of the only two new teachers who had master's degree, Fu's qualification was recognized by senior management.

Among us new teachers, there are two with master's degree. Me and another teacher, we have relatively higher qualification, so my bosses speak highly of us, they mention us all the time.

He was not excited about the salary and he was worried about his employment status because he did not understand the difference between formally employed teachers and special teaching post holders. Since the contract was for three years, he felt insecure about what would happen after that as well as his future including pension scheme:

The salary is so low. And the problem about employment quota, it makes me feel insecure. I always keep thinking about what would happen after these 3 years. Sometimes when I chat with my colleagues, we would worry about the pensions and other stuff.

As a new teacher, he was assigned the same workload as more experienced teachers. There were two history teachers in the school so they shared the teaching load. He taught history to seven different classes. He had three lessons scheduled every day except one day when he only had two lessons. Each of these classes had around sixty to seventy students so he was teaching more than four hundred students at the same time.

Even though he had heavy teaching load, he felt it was not as heavy as core subject teachers. He had more spare time comparing to core subject teachers and he could keep the weekend to himself which he felt happy about. He also enjoyed being financially independent. However, he felt his work was repetitive because he had to

teach the same content to seven different classes each week, even though this made the lesson preparation comparatively easier.

I have 3 lessons a day each week, except one day that I only have 2 lessons. I teach 7 different classes. Everyday it is repetitions, all day lectures. Everyday I basically said the same thing over and over and over again.

Fu felt the lack of experience in lesson planning. He realized that what he had learnt in university and what he wanted to teach were too difficult for secondary school students.

Because the questions I have in mind, are too difficult for my students to answer with their current knowledge base. But on the other hand, if the questions are too easy, I feel like it is an insult to myself. The things I learnt in university and graduate school are way too difficult for junior secondary school students.

At the same time, he felt it was difficult to build up more personal relationship with students because he taught more than four hundred students at the same time.

Rarely could I be friends with students. I teach 7 classes, about 400 students. I could not even remember all their names.

He recognized his tendency to adopt more traditional teacher-centred teaching style. His mentor and other teachers who have observed his lessons had suggested that he did not interact with the students enough. However, Fu felt difficulty in understanding and implementing the more student-centred approach when he had more than sixty to seventy students in one classroom and prescriptive teaching objectives and tasks

Now when I teach classes, I stuck in this so-called traditional teaching model of teacher autocracy. I drilled all these information into their heads.

The student-centeredness, it takes time. But there are so many compulsory curriculum contents, I don't really have extra time for class activities, I am still exploring by myself.

There are too many things to teach, I don't know how much information is appropriate. Plus there are more than 60 students in one classrooms, it is difficult to take everyone into consideration.

I am very confused by this student-centredness. It is just a very theoretical concept.

Fu adopted many different methods to teach history in order to attract students. He tried to make his class interesting and entertaining. However, he felt that he was constraint by trying to cover the contents for examinations. Moreover, he also felt that there was not much for him to do when some of the students did not concentrate.

I want to make my history class a story-telling class, like Pingshu (Story-telling of Chinese history events or folk stories) and Xiangsheng (comedy dialogue), that students would love to hear. It is more like me.

Now I follow the textbook. There are key points for the exams; one key event follows another, like daily errands.

I try to attract their attention using my instruction skills. For example, when I was teaching about Ming and Qing dynasty, I would talk about how Jing Yong incorporated the historical events and background into his novels. Also when I was teaching about the period of the three kingdoms, I would use The Records of Three Kingdoms and The Tale of Three Kingdoms as different versions of the story.

At the end of the first month, Fu won a school-wide teaching competition and was selected to represent his school to take part in a city-wide teaching competition. As a new teacher who had only been working for several weeks, he outshined many very experienced competing teachers and won the first place. His achievement was recognized by the senior management of the school.

Eight Months

In May 2011, the first year of teaching almost came to an end for Fu. Starting from the second semester in February, all the special teaching post teachers' salary had been raised to the same standard as formally employed teachers. Fu was happy with the improvements in treatment even though his employment status stayed the same. However, he felt that he was not treated fairly since he had better qualification comparing to other:

You see, I spent four years on my undergraduate study, and another three years on my master's degree, altogether it is seven years. And being a special-teaching-post holder means another three years before becoming a formally employed teacher. So I spent 10 years without social benefit like housing benefit, medical care and pension which is the basic right that should be guaranteed by the government to its citizens.

I think that if you have formal employment positions available, you should just give them to teachers who have master's degree. Now the policy is that students with master's degree can skip the writing exams but they still have to take oral exams and no more benefits.

Fu had grown to be a confident teacher. In fact, he used the word 'sophisticated' in describing his lesson plans and teaching. The downside of being 'sophisticated' was that he was getting to comfortable with himself in preparing for the class that he felt less motivated in looking for new teaching and learning resources and learning from other teachers:

I am more sophisticated. I can get my lesson plan done within several hours. Now I am efficient at searching for materials and designing classroom activities. But maybe because I am too familiar with the process, sometimes I am reluctant to find new sources or books.

Maybe I am not self-satisfied, maybe I am just lazy. You see, when I was preparing my lessons before, I wrote every word and every detail down on paper. But now I guess I am basically more skilled so I only write down the key points and prepared activities, and then I can organize my language when I am teaching and just improvise. I used to search for lots of examples of how other teachers teach one lesson and see how they organize teaching activities. But now I become more confident and I usually have something come up when I see a teaching task. But as a result, I spend less time on learning other teachers' strengths.

Fu demonstrated better understanding of the requirement of the new curriculum and he was devoted in creating an more interactive class environment, despite the difficulties brought by the large class size and lack of technological support. He incorporated the methods of learning history into his lesson plans and he encouraged his students to be actively involved:

Teaching history also means teaching the methods of learning history, for example, from illustrating, knowing, and telling, to summarising, understanding, and concluding, to comparing, discussing and evaluating.

I would ask my students to make duplicates of unearthed historical relics, such as Tongche and Quyuanli from Tang Dynasty, and then invite them to pretend to be museum guide tours to introduce the names, the origins, the place of discovery, and the value of these relics.

But the problem is that there are so many children in my class, how can I motivate each one of them? How can I take care of every child? It is not something that can be solved by discussions between us teachers. Also most of classrooms in our school do not have multi-media equipments which can be inconvenient at times.

Fu experienced the change of focus in the history class comparing to what it was when he was still a student. He admitted the importance of teaching methods rather than just facts and he was aware of the cultural and emotional aspects of teaching. However, he considered the most important job for teachers was to balance the time allocated to teaching methods and facts:

It is different from the requirement we had when we were in school. Now almost all subjects require similar learning methods to be delivered which aim to help students to be able to solve real life problems rather than just memorizing facts. However, sometimes I feel that it does not mean that memorizing facts is wrong. I think as Chinese, as an educated person, one should keep some basic common sense, like knowledge of history, in mind and

should be able to use it whenever one needs without having to go back to books.

I agree that the history subject should focus more on the emotion aspect of teaching, such as love for our country and our nation, love for history in general. But these kids are still young, they need to accumulate knowledge at this stage because emotions can not be derived from the historical facts.

Then I guess what is important is how to balance different methods and how to make good use of time. Each class is very short, but I have teaching tasks to finish. Each class I teach has more than seventy or eighty students which give children very limited time to present what they have learnt. Sometimes my students are not motivated because of this.

Being a teacher of lower grades, Fu was aware of the pressure of exams when he took on more teaching responsibilities teaching higher grades next year:

You do not feel so strongly when you are teaching lower grades, but in the senior year when you are facing high school entrance exams, who cares about methods or facts.

He agreed with what his school principal said about the four essential qualities of being a good teacher. And he had his own humorous way of explaining this idea of ‘teachers who possess the four essentials’ – ‘ethics, knowledge, methods and fortune.’

I think it is right. Ethics means teachers should act like teachers. They should have compassion for their students and have a sense of purpose which is to be responsible for their students. Knowledge is very obvious. Methods means a good teacher should know how to let his/her students to learn happily and grow happily. I think I am able to help my students learn and grow happily, but I can not guarantee to help them take exams happily and still be happy after they get the results.

And fortune means teachers should possess some kind of spiritual fortune. In plain words, teachers are not well-paid so they may never possess materials and at least they should possess some spiritual ones to keep on with their lives.

Above it all, Fu considered patience to be the most important quality of a good teacher, patient with his students, his repetitive work, and his life. Somehow Fu got used to the repetitive and mechanical aspect of teaching, but he was worried being less motivated and he was grateful for having two long holidays so that he could recharge and adjust emotionally and psychologically.

Now I think that the most essential quality is patience. It can be seen in many different ways. First of all you need to be patient with your life. You need to be able to tolerate doing the same thing everyday which is basically teaching

and marking, and also facing the same students and same colleagues. Secondly, you need to be patient with students when they make mistakes.

It is because of the mechanical and simple repetition. Especially for us who teach minor subjects, I teach several classes the same thing. It is a bit of a challenge as now what I care the most is not how to deliver active class each time, rather I am worried how I can be active and energetic enough to finish teaching the same thing to all these classes. I think I need to adjust myself, psychologically.

Moreover, you need to be patient with yourself. Yes the teaching profession is very stable, but you are still a teacher after ten years, and you are still a teacher after twenty years. Unlike working as civil servants, you get promoted one level follow another.

Fu was appointed as assistant class director at the beginning of the semester, with an experienced teacher shadowing him in the classroom. Now Fu's daily work was a mix of history teaching and class director work. His days usually started before 7:00am, a few minutes before the morning reading session started, so that he could monitor his students cleaning up the classroom and warn those students who were late. It was a lot more workload comparing to just being a subject teacher, but Fu enjoyed it because he felt 'closer' to his students by being a class director.

However, for Fu, 'be more emotionally invested' in his students had ups and downs. He saw his students as 'his own kids' and he could be protective when other subject teachers criticized his students' behaviour. He was proud of every little success of his students, either it was good exam results or sports meeting medals. He described himself as a 'male nanny' because he needed to be attentive to details of classroom affairs and he had to 'nag' a lot. However, he did feel inexperienced and difficult in dealing with more personal issues such as student dating and discipline issues.

I could be harsh on students before or tell on them when they do not behave. Not I have to be careful about how I approach their mistakes as I have to be with them all the time. I still think it is important to build a good relationship with students, even though it is very difficult.

Sometimes when girls start dating, that is all they can think about, leaving no time for study. If you talk to her, she thinks you are trying to harm her or sabotage her relationship; if you leave it to her parents, there is really nothing they can do and that's why they are calling the teachers. As teachers, we could not just lock the kids in the classroom. My mentor told me sometimes that she was afraid of class with too many girls and now I understand why.

Although Fu cared greatly about his relationship with his students, he learnt not to become the kind of teacher his students expected him to be because 'his students' did not really know what they wanted.

They say that they want strict teachers and they say that strict master brings up accomplished disciples. But when they do not finish homework on time they want teachers to give them a break. They say that they want teachers to be reasonable, but they are pretty stubborn when they are being unreasonable.

Like some girls in my class, if you talk to them from the bottom of your heart, they think you are a joke; if you go tough on them, they think you are their enemy. It is really difficult.

d) Teacher induction and professional development

When Fu first started, he was assigned a mentoring teacher, who was a very experienced history teacher with senior professional title. Whenever Fu had uncertainties and difficulties in lesson planning or teaching, he would go to his mentor for suggestions and help. In the second semester, he also had another mentoring teacher helping him with class director work. He found sometimes it was more helpful to observe quietly how more experienced teachers dealing with classroom or relationship issues than directly asking them.

His colleagues and other senior teachers would also observe his class on weekly basis and provide him with feedback. Fu and other new teachers also observed other teachers' classes and, sometimes they also had the opportunity to go to other schools to observe. As a special teaching position holder, he also attended annual training session organized by Yinchuan Bureau of Education.

During the weekly meeting held by the teaching and research section of the school, Fu shared with others his lesson plans and received comments from his colleagues. He enjoyed talking to experienced teachers and learning from them. He regarded these school-based activities very practical and useful because they 'focus on analysing specific problems'. But he also discovered the extent to which these activities could help as some issues such as class size simply could not be solved by teachers discussing with each other.

For Fu, professional learning and development included in-service training and part-time degree study which could help him improve teaching skills. But he also considered learning to be about personal growth and learning 'never ends'. Apart from the activities mentioned above, he also attended in-service training organized by Ningxia Education Department which included courses such as English language and I.T. However, Fu thought the reason he attended these courses were to obtain certificate for in-service training which were required for teacher promotion.

Sometimes it is about regulation, like it is required if I want to be promoted.

But to be honest, some training sessions are just format, like English and computer classes. These are compulsory, but we go only for the certificate, we already know what they teach.

He generally considered learning to be personal and should be self-directed. But sometimes, especially in the second semester when more workload was allocated to him, Fu felt he did not have enough time for self study, not even time to read a few pages of his beloved history books.

Fu was not aware of the national/provincial policy concerning new teachers except the ones on teacher qualification. He could not see the point of getting himself familiarized with policy directives:

Well, it is not like that things will change or my suggestions will be taken seriously if I care. School does not make the policy. No matter it is useful or not, it is just a formality. It is better to just do my job well.

At the end of each semester and the school year, Fu's performance would be assessed by comprehensive procedures which include lesson plan notes, student homework, peer and senior teacher observation, student feedback, student examination, and so on. Fu considered this approach to be reasonable, although he was concerned with some part of the evaluation.

It is time-consuming to write lesson plans; sometimes it's just a format. As to the student evaluations, if you are tough on one student, he/she will give you bad feedback. Even though I did it for the student's own good, he/she wouldn't understand. But generally speaking, it is reasonable.

The first two months experience as a teacher had great influence on how Fu's perspectives on the teaching profession. He realized that it was not easy to be a good teacher, and one of the challenges was the relationship between students who were born after 1990s:

Previously I thought it was easy to be a good teacher, now I think it is so difficult. It is difficult to get hold of it - the relationship with students. Now the students are very self-centred. They come from good family, they have indulging parents, but they are also under huge pressure of the exams. They favour the core subjects and neglect the minor subjects.

Fu felt that it was difficult to talk about future plans and he should concentrate on the present. At the moment, he was trying to keep up the good work and become a good teacher. Although he enjoyed being a teacher, he was also concerned with teacher treatment. He would not let his concerns influence his work, but he was considering career change and other options if he had the chance, unless teacher treatment could be improved.

Speaking of reality, people are realistic. I earn about 1000 RMB a month, and I am not formally employed yet. As a boy who just graduated, I am facing a lot of things, like starting a family and having a successful career. Also as a boy, I of course have my own thoughts. If the school could improve our treatment, I actually enjoy teaching, not huge pressure, relatively relaxing.

Appendix 10

A sample of Pronouns Used by Mr. Fu

Pronouns Used		Opinion Denoted
I	● As a boy	I felt I was not motivated; I am facing a lot of things, like starting a family and having a successful career; I of course have my own thoughts
	● As a student	I went to schools in the city; I grew up in a city; I was a little rebellion; I liked to go against the teachers; I was very interested in literature and history; I went to Ningxia University; I did not see teacher as the best career choice; I was pretty disappointed; I miss my life in high school; I felt I was lazy; I was sort of self-controlled; I rarely skipped class or stayed up to play computer games; I was very diligent when I was preparing for graduate school entrance exams; I went to study everyday; I feel that I am the kind of person; I have the intentions
	● As teacher	I think I am suitable to be teacher; I am not afraid of too much homework; I am learning and exploring; I am very confident; I consider myself to be an open-minded teacher; I want to be able to communicate with them from the bottom of my heart; I imagine; I want to discuss history events with them; I don't interact with the students much; I feel like it is an insult to myself; I stuck in this so-called traditional teaching model of teacher autocracy; I drilled all these information into their heads; I am still trying to figure my way out; I am trying to figure out; I don't really have extra time for class activities; I am still exploring by myself; I am aware of that it is still my problem at the end of the day; I am very confused by this student-centredness.; I am very self-directed; I consider myself to be an open-minded teacher; I am still learning about teaching methodology; I want to be the kind of teacher who can light up the classroom and have lively discussions with students; I like students to ask questions, to raise different opinions, to debate; I like to have my own style; I am very serious in the classroom; I came here after I got my master's degree; I don't know how much information is appropriate; I have no contact with the parents; I want to make my history class a story-telling class; Now I follow the textbook; I have just taken part in a city-wide competition for teaching skills; I have only been working for 2 months; I competed in the competition; I won the first place; I was very happy; I basically turn to my mentor; I need to explore by myself; I try to attract their attention using my instruction skills; I would talk about how Jing Yong incorporated the historical events and background into his novels; I would use The Records of Three Kingdoms and The Tale of Three Kingdoms as different versions of the story; I have 3 lessons a day each week, except one day that I only have 2 lessons; I teach 7 different classes; I could even remember all their names; I basically said the same thing over and over and over again; I have a lot of spare time; I have all the weekends to myself; I play football sometimes; I earn about 1000 RMB a

		month; I am not formally employed yet; I actually enjoy teaching; I still think I am bringing my advantages into play; I really enjoy teaching and communicating; I am more suitable to teach in universities; I will if I have the chance; I practice some Tai Chi everyday; I want to calm myself down; I generally think that learning is for personal growth; I attend these because I want to improve, and learn from experienced teachers; I learnt so much and I opened my eyes; I built up my confidence; I kept practicing at school; I also think that personal charisma is very important; I became a qualified teacher right after graduation; I know about regulations about teacher qualifications; I don't really remember the details; I don't really have opinions; I did it for the student's own good, he/she wouldn't understand; I thought it was easy to be a good teacher; I think it is so difficult
	● As a person	I am really into ancient books and texts; I am a man with principles; I try to be a man with good will; I have shortcomings; I am lack of patience, and I give up too soon
Me	● As a student	Others might see me as being lazy;
	● As a Special teaching post holder	It makes me feel insecure;
you	● Generalised 'you'	You think teaching is a stable job with good salary;
	● The researcher	You know what Chinese universities are like, right?
	● Generalized 'teachers'	if you are tough on one student, he/she will give you bad feedback; The hours you spent on lesson planning and homework grading are not included in your paid working hours.
We/Us	● New teachers with a master's degree	Me and another teacher, we have relatively higher qualification, so my bosses speak highly of us, they mention us all the time.
	● New teachers	Us new teachers went to observe demonstration classes all the time; we do case studies; we also have other teachers to help me in our school; We should rely on ourselves; Rarely do we dispel doubts; we need to be ourselves, each person is unique; we have different students each year which requires accumulation of experiences; we have to go in turn
	● Special teaching post holders	we would worry about the pensions and other stuff; we have heavier teaching workload; Us special teaching position holders have annual training session;
	● History teachers	Us history teachers are relatively relaxed; we need to know at least something from astronomy to geology
	● Minor subject teachers	Evaluation from students are important to us minor subject teachers;
	● Shandong province	We have very high standard for university-entrance examination grades; In my Shandong this school is in relatively bad condition;
	● Secondary school students	We knew it was bad, so we would go that way; we were a 'supervision-free' classroom.; We didn't have teachers monitoring our exams; We had competition so we had motivation.; the friendship we shared
	● Generalized 'Teachers'	Under the current educational system in China, all we can do is to show our sympathy for the students, but we still have our responsibilities; We need to be soft, but at the same time we need to be tough; This is what we have been through; we can do nothing about it; we learnt about them in university; we go only for the certificate; we already know what they teach
	● 'I' and my	we talk about everything ; we communicate as equal partners

	students	
	● teaching and research section	Like our teaching and research section holds weekly and monthly meetings to talk about lesson preparations and to reflect; We discuss our lesson plans on the meetings; We have some amazing senior teachers, they are very knowledgeable
He	● school	our school assigned teachers and students to help me practice; We also have staff sports game; Our school organises mentoring and observations
	● High school class director	He rescued me; He changed me; He encouraged me; he recognized all my achievements
	● A teacher from junior secondary school	He smoked, drank and gambled; He also had family problem; he used dirty words a lot
	● Mentor	He would look at my lesson plans and give me suggestions
	● director of teaching affairs	He is a interesting person; He loves doing sports; we talk about football stuff; we go play balls
	● Principal	The principal also paid attention to me;
They/them	● University classmates	They cheated on the exams;
	● Pupils who were born after 1990s	After all they are still children; they have their own ideological problem; ‘After you give them your nose, they want your whole face’; they won’t even be interested; History is minor subject, the grades are not important. Students don’t care about the exams. The best I can do is to ask them not to disturb other student; They have endless homework from the core courses; they could not even finish all the homework; They come to me to chat after class; they come from rich families; they are not concentrated; they are not paying enough attention to history; the students are very self-centred; They come from good family; they have indulging parents; they are also under huge pressure of the exams; They favour the core subjects and neglect the minor subjects
	● Generalized ‘people’	People should have self-awareness, they should be aware of their advantages and shortcomings; it is very different from what the others think, the salary is low, and the working hour is long
	● Generalized ‘teachers’	teachers need to keep up their prestige
	● Experienced teachers	I learnt new things just chatting with them
	● Core subject teachers	Core course teachers work really hard; core subjects teachers assessment include student grades

Appendix 11

School D Classroom Teaching Assessment Standard (2009-2010)

Units and Standard		Rating			
		A	B	C	D
(Pre-class) Teaching Plan (paperwork)	Completeness: clarification of teaching objectives; key and difficult knowledge points; designing of teaching methods; designing of blackboard writing; use of ICT and other teaching aids; homework;	5	4	3	2
	Scientific: flexible teaching methods and contents; reflect the logic behind the curriculum content;	5	4	3	2
	Advanced: creativity;	5	4	3	2
	Reflective: reflect the student-centred teaching promoted by curriculum reform; objectives for self-reflection;	5	4	3	2
(In class) Teaching Objectives	Clarified teaching objectives; easy for students to understand;	5	4	3	2
	Practicality; balance between comprehension and challenge; meet the needs of students at all levels;	5	4	3	2
Content	Coherent arrangement of lesson content; highlight key and difficult points	5	4	3	2
	Respect for students; take students' ideas into consideration;	5	4	3	2
	Rational question design;	5	4	3	2
Lesson Plan	Logical lesson plan; good preparation;	5	4	3	2
	Making key and difficult points easy to understand for students;	4	3	2	1
	Pay attention to student learning process; arrange review sessions;	5	4	3	2
	Use of textbooks and appropriate teaching materials;	5	4	3	2
Teaching Methods	Use of ICT software	5	4	3	2
	Democratic classroom management style; student participation;	5	4	3	2
	Facilitating student observation and active learning;	5	4	3	2

	Developing student problem-solving abilities;	5	4	3	2
Basic Skills	Speak standard Mandarin; precise and standardized speech; caring and dignified manner;	5	4	3	2
	Use of teaching aid;	5	4	3	2
	Design of blackboard writing;	5	4	3	2
Classroom Feedback	Student participation; student behaviour; classroom atmosphere;	5	4	3	2
	Students' attitudes towards learning;	5	4	3	2
	Reactions of students at different levels;	5	4	3	2
	Self-reflection on achievement of teaching objectives;	5	4	3	2
(After-class) Homework Grading	Strict regulations for students (writing style; submission date; format, etc);	5	4	3	2
	Appropriate quantity;	5	4	3	2
	Timely feedback with grading dates;	5	4	3	2
	Communication with students;	5	4	3	2
	Punishment for plagiarism;	5	4	3	2
	Praise for excellent performance from students;	5	4	3	2
	Informing students that homework is part of their formative assessment;	5	4	3	2
	Reach the minimum quantity requirement per month (see below) for homework grading	5	4	3	2

Subject	Grade one (minimum quantity requirement per month)	Grade two (minimum quantity requirement per month)
Chinese	8-9 times (including two essays)	8-9 times (including two essays)
Maths	12 times	12 times
English	12 times	12 times
Physics	8 times	8 times
Chemistry	8 times	8 times
Biology	6 times	6 times
Politics	4 times	8 times
History	4 times	8 times
Geography	4 times	8 times

Appendix 12

Teacher's Name:		Subject	
Teaching Hour:		Venue:	
Assessment Elements	Assessment Standard	Feedback	Suggestions
Pre-class Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Format ● Quantity ● Result 		
Cooperative Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student attitudes ● Communication 		
Classroom Showcase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student participation ● Delivery ● Logical thinking 		
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher participation ● Teacher talking time ● Directions given ● Student appraisal 		
Summary of Assessment:			

Appendix 13

Ningxia Secondary School Teachers Basic Teaching Qualities and Skills Test Form and Rating standard

Teacher's Name:			Subject		Date:
Assessment guideline	Standard				
Element	Excellent Performance	Good Performance	Pass Performance	Weak Performance	Assessment Method
Achievement of Teaching Objectives (15 points)	Clearly clarified teaching objectives; Appropriate expectations for students; In accordance with curriculum standard and objectives; Cmprise elements of moral education in the teaching plan;				Lesson plan; Classroom observation;
	15-14	13-12	11-9	8>	
Comprehension of Textbook Content (20 points)	Appropriate lesson content; Emphasis of key and difficult points; Focus on student ability development; Proper use of textbook;				Lesson Plan; Classroom observation; After-class Q&A session
	20-18	17-15	14-12	11>	
Classroom Organization Skills (20 points)	Motivate student learning; natural and warm attitude; good classroom order; logical teaching process; flexibility; pay attention to student feedback;				Classroom observation
	20-18	17-15	14-12	11>	

Basic Quality (20 points)	Proper classroom language; vivid and accurate expression; Putonghua; proper body language; correct, neat and orderly blackboard writing; ability to explain difficult contents;				Classroom observation
	20-18	17-15	14-12	11>	Classroom observation
IT skills (15 points)	Ability to use modern educational technologies to facilitate teaching; ability to create and use teaching aid to facilitate learning; standardized and regulated laboratory instructions; ability to give right directions;				Lesson plan; Teacher's note; Classroom observation
	15-14	13-12	11-9	8>	
Student Reaction (10 points)	Student participation attitudes; student learning attitudes; achievement of students of different levels;				Classroom observation;
	10-9	8-7	6	5>	After-class discussion